# FROM LIBERTY TO BREST-LITOVSK

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# FROM LIBERTY TO BREST-LITOVSK

## THE FIRST YEAR OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

BY

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(Mrs. HAROLD WILLIAMS)

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J'entreprends de conter l'année épouvantable
Et voilà que j'hésite, accoudé sur ma table. . . .
N'importe. Poursuivons. L'histoire en a besoin.
Ce siècle est à la barre et je suis son témoin.

*L'Année Terrible*, VICTOR HUGO.

"The word 'Brotherhood' you have inscribed upon your banners, but you have not written it in your hearts and minds."—*From a speech of the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, General M. V. Alexeieff, delivered on May* 20, 1917, *at an Officers' Congress at General Headquarters.*

# PREFACE

I HAVE tried in this book to elucidate, as far as was in my power, the development of the fundamental ideas of the Socialist parties in the Russian Revolution and their reflection in the life of the masses. A revolution is a very complex thing, especially in such an immense country as Russia, with its large and varied population, and it goes without saying that, far from claiming to have described it exhaustively, I realise only too clearly that there are numbers of questions on which I have barely touched.

National complications and contradictions, the financial crash, the disorganisation of transport, production and exchange, the agrarian disorders, the food catastrophe that has overwhelmed the North, particularly the towns—at all these things I have merely been able to hint. I have refrained, too, from the temptation to dwell on the external, dramatic side of the Revolution of which I was a witness from day to day. My aim has been to avoid being carried away by my personal impressions, and to be as objective as one may be when writing of the sufferings, the convulsions, and, too often, of the humiliations of one's own people.

These humiliations have been so great, in so fearful, in so criminal a form did the brutality latent in every man display itself at times in the Russian masses, that

more than once in the midst of my work I have stopped, doubting whether I ought to continue.

And again I have picked up my pen, for it seemed to me that this terrible lesson had its significance for others besides ourselves. The Socialists have made of my country a tremendous experimental station for their dogmas and theories. I know that the best of them sincerely desired to bring happiness to the labouring masses. They were entranced by the dogmatic illusions of the Internationale, and forgot that man is the least known, the least studied of all beings upon the earth, and that the psychology of the individual, still more of the mass, moves by ways as yet uncharted, and is guided by forces that elude clear apprehension.

And for this reason, bitter though the truth about the Russian Revolution may be, I have felt that we must have the courage to tell it.

I trust that the tragical lessons of a strange far-away land and the insane and criminal Socialistic experiments of the Maximalists may serve as a stern warning for other peoples. It is worth while for those who are struggling to secure for mankind happier and more worthy conditions of life to read attentively the blood-stained pages of the Russian Revolution. If they realise what our mistakes were, what were our delusions and our crimes, and if, avoiding these, they find other ways surer and less cruel, then we Russians will have at least this consolation that the immeasurable sufferings of Russia are an historical sacrifice offered for the sake of a brighter future for mankind.

Who knows? Perhaps the path to truth leads only through a suffering that cleanses and ennobles.

London, *April* 1919.

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# CHAPTER I

## THE DOWNFALL OF THE OLD RÉGIME

A patriotic opposition—The storm brewing—Nicholas II. and the Duma —Monday March 12—The joy of liberty—Two centres—Rodzianko and Chheidze—A Government in formation—Abdication of the Tsar —Ministers of Prince G. Lvoff's Cabinet.

During the morning of the 12th of March I was rung up by a telephone message, " It has begun."

At once I realised what had happened. No, that is incorrect. At the time none of us realised what was taking place, none realised what a revolution really meant. But we all, the whole city, realised at once that it *was* the Revolution.

The winter of 1916–17 had passed in a state of nervous and oppressed expectancy. The front was war-weary, and the homeland still more so. Neither the political nor the economic structure of Russia was prepared for such a prolonged and strenuous military tension. The country having given its best to the army, the front held out better than the rear. Difficulties in the food-supply were beginning to make themselves felt. Compared with what the Russian towns were destined to undergo owing to the Revolution, these restrictions were, as yet, insignificant. Yet at the time all food embarrassments were still a novelty and provoked general discontent. This enhanced the ever-growing distrust and antagonism towards the Govern-

ment. The Duma gradually became the authoritative centre of patriotic and therefore opposition elements. It was an opposition rallied around the motto, "Defence of the Fatherland." The mere shadow of an agreement with Germany provoked the sharp protest of these circles. For the purpose of a more energetic carrying-on of the war the people's representatives persistently demanded "a Ministry of confidence," *i.e.* that the blind, unpopular, incapable, and unintelligent Ministers should be replaced by universally respected, honourable public men. Nicholas II. remained deaf to these demands, treating them as an insolent infringement of his prerogative as an autocrat. His tenacity augmented the opposition. Throughout Russia, both at the front and at home, rumour grew ever louder concerning the pernicious influence exercised by the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, at whose side rose the sinister figure of Gregory Rasputin. This charlatan and hypnotist had wormed himself into the Tsar's palace and gradually acquired a limitless power over the hysterical Empress, and through her over the Sovereign. Rasputin's proximity to the Tsar's family proved fatal to the dynasty, for no political criticism can harm the prestige of Tsars so effectually as the personal weakness, vice, or debasement of the members of a royal house.

Rumours were current, up to now unrepudiated, but likewise unconfirmed, that the Germans were influencing Alexandra Feodorovna through the medium of Rasputin and Stürmer. Haughty and unapproachable, she lacked popularity, and was all the more readily suspected of almost anything, even of pro-Germanism, since the crowd is always ready to believe anything that tends to augment their suspicions. In November the Duma made an emphatic demand for a change in the Government's policy. On the 14th of November

the leader of the opposition, P. N. Milyukoff, made a historical speech, which is considered by many as marking the first day of the revolution. Characterising the policy of the Prime Minister, Stürmer, P. N. Milyukoff pointed out that in dwelling upon the conduct of the head of the Government one could not refrain from putting the question, " What is it, folly or treason ? "

In those days these words were upon everybody's lips. The incapacity of the authorities became ever more apparent. Government circles were incapable of realising the necessity of granting concessions. Meanwhile only in unison with trusted statesmen could the Government bring the war with Germany to a victorious end.

The assassination of Rasputin came as a first consequence of the speeches uttered in the Duma. This was a society revolt, a protest of aristocrats and monarchists against the degradation of the Tsar's dignity. The circles which planned this assassination had not the habit of political reflexion. They did not realise that Rasputin was not a casual phenomenon, but the sign of the profound dissolution of the autocratic principle, which the monarchists aspired to save. The leading part in Rasputin's murder was played by the young Count Yusupoff-Sumarokoff-Elston, one of the wealthiest of Russian aristocrats, a relative of the Tsar by his marriage with the daughter of Nicholas II.'s sister.

His chief assistant and accomplice was one of the most gifted and energetic defenders of the autocracy, a member of the Duma, Vl. Purishkevich. By exterminating the evil genius of the Tsar's family these men hoped to purify the principle of autocracy itself and save the old régime. But nothing was changed with Rasputin's removal, nothing improved either in affairs of the State or in the Tsar's situation. Formerly the

Tsar's various mistakes and weaknesses were attributed to Rasputin's evil influence—now the last veil had been withdrawn and the insignificant little officer, slightly educated, unintelligent, incapable of following and grasping all the complexity of contemporary social and political life—stood out, a lonely figure attracting the ever more malevolent attention of public opinion. Rasputin was no more, but the Ministers appointed by this half-illiterate rascal remained at their posts and conducted the affairs of the State as if still guided by his shadow.

Discontent grew apace, merging into exasperation. As in physical nature, there are moments in political life when it becomes difficult to breathe. Clouds gather ever lower and lower. Gusts of wind are succeeded by a deadly calm. The sultry heat awes and oppresses, and one longs for the flash of lightning, for the crash of thunder.

Such was our life from November to the beginning of March. The political disorganisation became most marked in measures relating to the food-supply. On the 8th of March the Minister of Agriculture, Rittikh, in a speech at the Duma candidly avowed the Government's incapacity to deal unaided with the food-supply. And while the Duma listened to his speech in morose and surly silence, the mob in the labour district of the Vyborgsky was already looting the markets and parading the streets with shouts of "Bread!" This happened on Thursday the 8th of March. On Friday, towards evening, trams stopped running. The numbers of demonstrators increased. Cossack scouts patrolled the city. But the crowd, the vast heterogeneous crowd, which flooded the streets not only did not fear them, but seemed to absorb the Cossacks amicably into its own surging ranks.

On Saturday machine-guns were brought into action. The Minister of the Interior, Protopopoff, determined to suppress the ferment by force of arms. Machine-guns distributed long beforehand among the police stations were posted throughout the city. Policemen were ordered to fire at the crowd. Whether many people did not realise the danger, or whether the popular feeling had swelled into an as yet unexpressed but universal determination to end with the old police régime once for all—at all events the machine-guns excited no panic. The crowds dispersed, flocked into a neighbouring street, but would not go home. They waited. Nevertheless some were killed and wounded both on Saturday and Sunday. The police were the only ones to fire in those two days. The crowds did not retaliate, nor was there any show of fighting-spirit on their part. It was difficult to understand whether this was merely a popular agitation or a revolution? What would be the outcome of it all?

On Monday the 12th of March all doubts were dispelled. The revolution had begun. The Volynsky, Litovsky, and Kexholm regiments revolted. Several officers were killed for ordering the soldiers to come out and help the police. The soldiers poured out of their barracks into the street, but did not know what to do next. They had no one to guide them. Tumultuous, absolutely unorganised crowds of soldiers rushed hither and thither for some unknown reason, gradually rallying towards the Liteiny Prospect.

When at about eleven in the morning we walked towards the Taurida Palace where the Duma was sitting, shots were heard from all sides singly or in volleys. It was only later we learned that this was a harmless firing into the air.

All was quiet at the Taurida Palace. Deputies were

wandering in the lobbies nervously discussing the situation.

On the 10th of March the Tsar had decreed the dissolution of the Duma, but the President of the Duma, Michael Rodzianko, before he knew of this decree, had sent the following telegram to the Tsar at the Stavka :

> The situation is serious. There is anarchy in the capital. The Government is paralysed. Transport, food, and fuel supply are completely disorganised. Universal discontent is increasing. Disorderly firing is going on in the streets. Some troops are firing at each other. It is urgently necessary to entrust a man enjoying the confidence of the country with the formation of a new Government. Delay is impossible. Any tardiness is fatal. I pray God that at this hour the responsibility may not fall upon the Sovereign.

Copies of the above telegram were also sent by Rodzianko to all the army commanders with the request that they should endeavour to persuade the Tsar of the urgency of granting concessions.

The decree of dissolution was the reply. Rodzianko then sent his second and last telegram to the Tsar.

> The situation is growing worse. Measures should be taken immediately, as to-morrow it will be too late. The final decisive hour for Motherland and dynasty has struck.

This telegram also remained unanswered. It was said later that the Tsar's courtiers, with the cynical rapacious Court adventurer, General Voeikoff, at their head, purposely withheld Rodzianko's telegrams, because being opposed to concessions they deemed themselves sufficiently strong to suppress the malcontents with machine-guns. The same General Voeikoff, when it became known that the Revolution had broken out at Petrograd, proposed to Nicholas II. to open the front to the Germans and place himself under the Kaiser's protection.

But the last of the Romanoffs did not consent to this dishonourable proposal. Nicholas II. refused. Before the soldiers had had time to approach the Taurida Palace, the Executive Committee of the Duma had decided to disobey the order of dissolution. But what was to be done next no one knew, and the same kind of confusion reigned amid the people's representatives as was evident in the midst of the revolted regiments, who did not at once manage to find their way to the Duma.

Only towards one o'clock in the afternoon, led by intellectuals fired with revolutionary enthusiasm, did the first detachments of soldiers reach the Palace. Members of the Duma greeted them with speeches of welcome. All around in the adjacent streets one could hear the heavy tramp of soldiers' feet. Crowds of people from all the barracks, from every part of the city, flowed to the Taurida Palace.

At once the Duma became the centre. In the afternoon of the 12th of March the Provisional Committee of the Duma was formed by the unanimous decision of the deputies. M. Rodzianko, a confirmed Monarchist, hesitated at first, but patriotism gaining the better of Court traditions, he consented to become the President of the Committee. In the evening the Duma issued the following proclamation :

> The Provisional Committee of the State Duma has found itself compelled, under the distressing conditions of internal disintegration provoked by the policy of the Government, to take into its hands the re-establishment of political and public order. Fully conscious of the responsibility attached to this decision, the Committee expresses the certitude that both the community and the army will come to their aid at the difficult moment of creating a new Government corresponding to the desire, and capable of enjoying the confidence, of the people.

This message was signed by M. Rodzianko, but

members of all parties were represented in the Committee, including two Socialists, A. Kerensky and N. Chheidze. It seemed as though a real national centre had been created here, which by absorbing various currents of political opinion would become capable of organising a Government and carrying on the war to the end. Events, however, took a different course. From the very first day two distinct political tendencies were manifested.

In the afternoon of March 12 tidings reached the Taurida Palace that a revolutionary mob was besieging the so-called Kresty prison on the Vyborg side, where the Labour group of the War Industries Committee was imprisoned. Running past me into the street, where he had to address the soldiers, Kerensky exclaimed joyously:

"Now, then, the real masters will come with the Labour group!"

I remember in spite of the tumult of impressions crowding upon me from all sides how strangely I was struck by these words. To me it seemed as though the master, the Duma, were already here, and that there was no need to seek for another. We were, however, mistaken, both Kerensky and myself. Neither the Labour group nor the State Duma succeeded in retaining their influence or mastering the situation.[1]

All day long thousands of soldiers poured towards the Taurida Palace, around which the human ocean ebbed and flowed. Yet upon that first day of the Russian Revolution the soldiers who overthrew the old régime showed no sign of triumph. I gazed into their

[1] The Labour group had been attached to the War Industries Committees, formed after the summer retreat of 1915, which had revealed the fact that the Russian Army was fighting almost without arms and munitions. The aim of these Committees was the organisation of munition factories. The members of the Labour group were moderate Social-Democrats.

faces, as standing by force of habit in perfectly ordered rows before the entrance they listened with fixed attention to the deputies' speeches. The orators exalted the deeds of the revolutionary troops, but the soldiers' countenances seemed excited and uncertain. They did not realise what had happened, did not know whether they had behaved well or ill! Perhaps some of them considered themselves in the light not so much of heroes as of rebels.

By the middle of the day the Taurida Palace was transformed into a military camp. The halls and endless corridors filled with soldiers. Rifle cartridges and machine-gun belts were piled up in the circular hall hung with large framed war maps marking the movements of Russian and Allied troops. Machine-guns were scattered about. But even these military preparations did not reassure the soldiers. I asked the stalwart, gallant Volynsky men whether they would return to their barracks for supper. The soldiers only clustered closer around me and protested excitedly:

"To the barracks? Oh, no! What for? The whole lot of us would be shot. We shan't move from the Duma. Here we'll all remain, let them defend us here."

As yet there was not much self-confidence in these troops, who from being Tsarist had in a few hours become revolutionary. Whence, indeed, could self-confidence arise when no one knew exactly anything of the general situation? Rumours were current that somewhere there were troops which had remained loyal to Nicholas II., that they might appear at any moment. Shots were being fired from everywhere. Police fired and were fired at, some one else was firing too, no one knew why or at whom. Revolution swept like a whirlwind, and it was difficult to hearken to all its voices.

Strange to say, the civilian population of Petrograd exhibited far greater assurance and less fear than the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison.

In joyous exaltation, with fiery enthusiasm and faith in free Russia, Petrograd lived through the honeymoon of liberty. All were filled with the proud consciousness that at last the Russian people was liberated from the oppressive autocracy, and would itself create and build up its new life. The morose, unsociable Petrograd citizens were unrecognisable. Day and night the streets were thronged with people, notwithstanding that firing was still going on in the city, that motor-cars bristling on all sides with rifles went tearing along the streets. Their occupants—soldiers and civilians, mostly young men—rushed they knew themselves not whither on the look-out for a non-existent enemy. These overzealous warriors only provoked good-humoured smiles. In those days good-nature and goodwill were general, and created a strong, common feeling, breathing energy and force. People looked joyfully and trustfully into each other's eyes and smiled with that irrepressible happy smile which beams upon lovers' faces.

We believed that Russia stood upon the threshold of a new, longed-for life, when every one would feel himself equally free, when rights and duties would be assigned, not as a series of privileges and compulsions, but as something inherent in every individual.

It was a joy to behold how the pathos of liberty was kindled in the hearts of drab, insignificant men and women, who but yesterday had felt themselves to be pariahs. On the second or third day of the Revolution a telegraph messenger brought me a telegram, and, handing it to me, said :

" Thank you so much."

I looked at him in surprise. A pale, tired-out,

sickly, hollow-cheeked man stood before me. But the light in his eyes relieved the drab insignificance of his countenance.

"What for?" I asked him.

"Why, to be sure, we know about it," he said warmly, "although we are small people, and have kept to our slums afraid to move, still we knew of what others did. I have read your articles in the papers and heard your speeches at meetings. We also understand what different people stand for. Well, thank God, we've gained our liberty, you and I. It seems to me as if I were born again. What were we before now? Nothing. Worse off than dogs. Harassed by every one, not looked upon as human beings. And now my back is straightened. I seem to tread on air, my very soul seems to sing—I am a man, I am no longer a slave but a free man."

His words gushed out in torrents. The joy of liberty was bubbling in him like wine. I could not take my gaze off the eyes that sparkled with pride and joy. We both laughed with that glad laugh which means so much more than words. And the telegraph messenger hastened to tell his story in order to make me realise more vividly the importance of all that was filling his soul to overflowing:

"Here I have a wife and five children. As to myself, I am an invalid. I have consumption. You yourself know how hard my work is. Out in the street in all weathers. Our wages are beggarly—forty roubles a month. But I claim nothing, I want nothing, no increase, nothing. We'll bear it, we'll weather it somehow. If only we can hold firmly together, only not return to what was before. But we'll hold together, won't we?"

The small grey eyes shone with hope and faith. We parted like old friends with a hearty hand-shake. And

often in the gloomy days of disillusion and defeat I thought of this consumptive postman, of his enthusiasm, his touching intimacy with all whom he looked upon as friends of liberty, his heroic readiness to bear any further material misfortunes if only to safeguard his rights as a man and citizen.

His was by no means an exceptional case. Liberty had straightened out many people, had made them kinder and more sociable. All around there rose the overwhelming consciousness of proximity to and of fusion with millions of other people. Probably something of the kind is felt in moments of mass religious movements. There, too, inspired by mystic transport, the spiritual force of one suddenly becomes absorbed by the kindred forces of other individuals who were but recently strangers, and seemed hopelessly isolated each in his own individuality. And man is no longer alone. He becomes part of a whole. His soul expands and becomes enriched because it has come into touch with the emotions of its fellows, because it has absorbed their rapture and given them its own enthusiasm. In those days all the partitions raised by contemporary life between fellow-men disappeared. People ceased to look askance at each other with that feeling of distrustful half-enmity which the citizen of a contemporary state entertains towards his unknown neighbour. As if a veil had been drawn for a moment and we were allowed a vision of that kingdom, where man unto man is not wolf, but a friend, where each is certain that his neighbour wishes him good, not evil, and is therefore ready to display the best, the most magnanimous part of his own self.

This did not last long. Once more the veil was drawn, leaden and impenetrable, and the brief dazzling glimpse of a blue fairy-tale was over. But those who

have actually lived it know that in spite of all human failings and vices, the crowd, even a contemporary crowd, is capable of rising to a sense of consummate, all-purifying brotherhood. Such days cannot be forgotten. Such days should not be forgotten, for such collective emotions are a kind of historic revelation reminding men of what mankind may become if purified from all low and selfish instincts.

Not in vain in those days was one word upon all lips—Christ's Glorious Resurrection. Easter in Russia is always kept with a special bright solemnity, and these words not only marked the gladness of common emotions, but held the unexpressed avowal that we were all living participators in a collective miracle, a miracle of the resurrection of bright, lofty emotions among the people.

A heavy and bloody price did the Russian people pay for the depths of that joy. Some one deceived it, some one troubled its soul, thrust it along the path of crime and degradation, and watered the Russian land with blood and tears. . . . But in the days of early rapture we all believed that this early, inspiriting sense of community could be retained and deepened, that national unity would help us to defend Russia from the Germans and work out a new statehood, strong and free.

It seemed as though all Russia in a common impulse had accepted the long-awaited liberty as a gift for the bloody sacrifices offered upon the battlefields, as a result of the century-old struggle for the rights of the people.

But this unity was fictitious. The Tsarist authority had so far outlived itself that it offered almost no resistance to the Revolution, if we do not take into account the few thousand policemen who endeavoured to reinstate the fallen autocracy with the aid of machine-

guns. In two days they were swept away. On Monday the foremost soldiers of the revolt marched to the Taurida Palace, and already by Wednesday the last of the police machine-gunners were picked by the crowd off the roof of St. Isaac's Cathedral, while the half-insane Minister, Protopopoff, who directed the policemen's military operations, was under arrest in company with other Ministers. The *coup d'état* was accomplished almost without struggle and bloodshed. The arms with which the insurgents had furnished themselves were almost unneeded. It seemed as if power would painlessly pass over to the people. Public men, soldiers, workmen, the intelligentsia—all flocked to the Taurida Palace, feeling that within these white walls were the chief mainstay and the legal succession of Russian stateship. Towards the very first evening, however, two centres were already formed in the Palace—the Committee of the Duma and the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies.

At the first meeting of the Soviet, held at about nine in the evening, very few workmen were present. On either side of the long table one saw the familiar faces of doctors, lawyers, engineers, of all the radical Petrograd intelligentsia, long-standing adversaries of the Tsarist régime. The day, long dreamed of by generations of Russian educated people, had dawned at last. The revolutionary people had overthrown autocracy. The rôle of the intelligentsia, as that of an irresponsible opposition, was over. It had now to pass to construction, and in the first place to build up a government and learn to obey it.

Few at that moment realised that the most strenuous work of all still lay ahead; that however difficult had been the overthrow of the old order, the establishment of the new would be still harder.

The Social-Democrat, Chheidze, a Georgian member of the Duma for Transcaucasia, was elected chairman of the first meeting of the Soviet.

The proclamation issued that same night by the Soviet already bore a trace of the fatal cleavage, which subsequently split all Russia in twain. It said :

> Yesterday, 12th of March, a Soviet of Workmen's Deputies was formed in the capital, composed of delegates from factories and workshops, of revolted military units as well as of representatives of democratic and socialist parties and groups. The Soviet of Workmen's Deputies sitting in the Duma considers its fundamental task to be the organisation of popular forces, and the struggle for the final consolidation of the people's government in Russia. The Soviet has appointed district commissaries for *establishing the people's power* in the Petrograd areas. We invite the entire population of the Capital to rally round the Soviet, to organise local Committees and take over the management of all local affairs.

In this way two centres, issuing appeals and orders, came into being simultaneously. This, of course, was not a chance event. This duality only reflected a fundamental divergency of principle. Representatives of these two groups held different conceptions of Russia's political and social needs. But infinitely more dangerous proved the difference in their standards of security for the State, and on that they split up Russia. On the one side were those who rejoicing in liberty were strongly convinced that Russia's independence and future were closely bound up with the efficiency of the army, that the Motherland must be defended not by declarations and meetings but by force of arms. On the other side were internationalists of various shades. The best among them believed that German and Austrian proletarians could be persuaded to throw down their rifles, to turn their swords into ploughshares. The

thoughts and deeds of the worst can only be judged after the publication of the secret documents in German archives. The Duma Committee placed itself at the head of the first, the defencist, party.

It cannot be said that no one but defeatists were to be found in the Soviet or around it. Such a statement would be incorrect. Socialists of all denominations rallied around the Soviet, recognising it as their own democratic organisation, and the Socialists also included some defencists. But the fact of Chheidze's election as President of the Soviet was in itself a bad sign.

From the first days of the war Chheidze had made speeches in the Duma demanding the liquidation of the war. From motives of prudence, for fear of persecution, he was obliged to veil his undoubted pacifism in vague allusions and innuendoes. But as a consistent Social-Democrat he could not be pro-war, because he placed class-principle above devotion to the Motherland. Zimmerwald and its mottoes were comprehensible and familiar to Chheidze. But Russia, her integrity, and her interests were alien to him.[1]

A Georgian by origin, speaking broken Russian, a man of little education and limited intelligence, Chheidze acquired prominence in the Social-Democratic faction not on account of his talent, but because other members were still more colourless. This schoolmaster from a small town of Transcaucasia combined the secret cunning of an Asiatic with a negligent disdain for the interests of the State whose destinies he aspired to govern. History had raised him to unmerited heights and temporarily endowed him with an amount of influence over the

[1] Chheidze definitely proved this later, when with German assistance and in company with other Georgian Social-Democrats he proclaimed the independence of Georgia. And when the Germans were defeated, he started for Paris with another "Russian" revolutionary, Tsereteli, to obtain the Allies' sanction for an independence originally received from the Germans.

affairs of the Russian people to which he had no right, either by his personal qualities or by his nationality. In general the part played in the Russian Revolution by non-Russian leaders may be looked upon as a sort of reaction, as a historical Nemesis for the injustice of the Russian Government towards these un-Russian citizens of Russia. But this abstract interpretation does little to mitigate the bitterness of this foreign domination over the Russian people at the time of its most terrible historical upheavals and trials.

In contrast with the Soviet a man of totally different character appeared at the head of the Committee of the State Duma. This was Michael Vladimirovich Rodzianko, a true Russian, a wealthy landowner, who had served in the Guards in his youth, a courtier to whom proximity to the Court and the Dynasty was habitual, and loyalty to the autocracy one of the fundamental principles of his political creed. To a man of this type the Revolution could not in a sense be anything but a catastrophe. But feeling insulted in his national pride he had some time before joined the opposition. Military disappointments, fear for Russia's future, patriotic indignation that, owing to the unpreparedness of the Tsarist régime, no genius in her generals, no amount of heroism in officers and men could achieve decisive victory for Russia—all this forced Rodzianko, as well as the class of society to which he belonged, to join the opposition. The same feeling manifested itself in the persistent demands of the Duma, and in that as yet unformulated ferment of military and society circles which found expression in the murder of Rasputin and was to have exercised pressure upon the Tsar himself.

The opposition of which M. Rodzianko found himself the head as President of the Duma was a patriotic opposition. These men placed as their foremost and

fundamental task the organisation of the country for defence and war with Germany to a victorious end. They consider that this object may only be achieved by introducing into the Government men having the confidence of the country. And these new Ministers would undertake to see that a series of necessary reforms were carried through.

Various parties of the Duma united upon this platform and formed the so-called Progressive *bloc*.

The Socialists, including Chheidze and Kerensky, did not join the *bloc*, as they did not share the attitude of the others in regard to the war. They were in opposition to the Government in the name of international pacifism, but not in the name of Russia's interests. Aims, methods, psychology—everything differed in these two groups of the opposition.

So much personal enmity had accumulated between Chheidze and Rodzianko during the years of their association in the Duma, that this too could not but influence the relations between the Committee of the Duma and the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies.

As President of the Duma Rodzianko frequently called Chheidze to order, cut short his speeches, and even expelled him for several sittings. Before the war such encounters were provoked by the too pronounced attacks against the Government or the too glowingly Socialistic speeches of Chheidze and his adherents; in war-time—by the defeatist tendencies clearly displayed in all the speeches delivered by the entire Social-Democratic group.

Later, however, Chheidze settled all scores. On one of the very first days of the revolution, when soldiers crowding the Catherine Hall were still eagerly listening to all the members of the Duma, Chheidze, pointing to the President of the Duma, asked in his bitter, rasping voice:

"You had better ask Mr. Rodzianko whether he intends parting with his lands and also what he thinks of the form of government?"

This was sheer provocation, but Rodzianko remained unperturbed. His reply was simple and concise.

"Yes, I am a landowner. But if the Constituent Assembly decrees to give my land to the peasants I will submit to the will of the people. I will submit to it, too, if the Constituent Assembly establishes a Republic. I will serve the Republic as loyally as I have served the Monarchy."

As a matter of course such strained dialogues did not tend to ameliorate the mutual relations of the two men or to smooth over their differences. Meanwhile the Committee of the Duma and the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies, headed by these diametrically opposed politicians, became the two centres which attracted public forces and sympathies, and the Provisional Government was the outcome of an agreement between the two.

The first agreement between the Committee of the Duma and the Soviet was reached very rapidly. Both the composition of the Cabinet and the programme announced by Prince Lvoff's Government were worked out in common. Details of these negotiations remained unknown to the public. They took place in one of the apartments of the Taurida Palace which the most prominent political leaders never left at all during those ardent early days. There they slept, hither were their meals brought to them as though they were under arrest. The palace was overrun by a heterogeneous, restless, noisy crowd. Soldiers came up in complete units and singly. Young ladies scurried about bringing tea and sandwiches. Workmen, members of the Duma, arrested Ministers and policemen. Military cadets

mounted guard. Officers of Allied missions were visible here and there; A.D.C.'s and Generals came to the Duma to declare their loyalty to the new Government. All this motley crowd surged through the endless halls and corridors of the Duma. Incessant meetings were held all over the building. Speeches were uttered, excited, ardent speeches, already savouring of demagogy.

It happened now and again that soldiers occupying the centre of the hall would listen breathlessly to a Socialist orator shouting in a hoarse voice:

"The Revolution continues! All the land, all freedom is yours!"

And surrounding the electrified crowd stood three rows of queues. One queue was composed of workmen with agitated faces, fully conscious of the importance of the moment. Each held a mandate in his hand. These were the delegates elected by the factories to the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies, one delegate to every thousand. Alongside of these representatives of the newly born Democratic power were serried ranks of men, also clad for the most part in mufti, but surly and gloomy, looking like beasts that had been run down. Now and then amid their ranks one could catch a glimpse of the familiar police uniform. These were the arrested members of the police force. Many of them bore bloody marks and traces of blows upon their faces. A regular hunt for policemen was going on in those days. There were cases of cruel shooting and lynching. But more often than not they were merely seized and dragged to the Taurida Palace. Every one and everything were brought at the time to the palace—arms, cartridges, sacks of flour, prisoners—everything, in fact, whether good or bad.

Dividing the workmen-delegates from their vanquished disarmed enemies—the police—stretched the

orderly lines of the cadets. These young men were charged from the very outset with the task of preserving order and mounting guard. Amidst the general confusion and excitement the cadet schools alone preserved discipline and order. These three closely contiguous but unblending groups, surrounding the tossing crowd of soldiers, remain graven in my memory as one of the symbols of Russia's various tendencies and forces. But this was no time for observation or reflexion. Like leaves whirling in the wind, men and thoughts rush onwards in the turmoil of revolution.

Amidst the clamour and rumbling which filled or rather broke into the Taurida Palace as the reflexion of the general outdoor effervescence of all Petrograd and all Russia, the political leaders sitting in close consultation in the apartments of the President of the Duma were obliged to formulate their decisions.

Machine-guns stopped firing on the 14th of March, and on the 15th the composition of the new Cabinet and its programme were already decided upon.

The latter was, in its way, a sort of Magna Charta. It contained all the necessary political promises, but not a word was said of the war with Germany. Later on members of the Government explained this omission by the fact that at the time every one considered the continuation of the war as so absolutely inevitable, that there had been no argument about the matter. Nevertheless, the impression created was unfavourable.

The political clauses of the programme voiced the aspirations which had long united all Russian progressive elements.

A political amnesty, freedom of speech, of trade unions and strikes, abolition of all privileges, both class and national, a people's militia instead of a police, and lastly, the two principal clauses—elections for local self-

government upon the principle of universal suffrage, and immediate preparatory measures for the calling of a *Constituent Assembly elected by universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage which would establish the form of Government and the Constitution of the country.*

All these clauses had been long accepted in theory by all the principal opposition parties. Here was no cause for divergencies, and a vast majority of thinking Russians were perfectly satisfied with the political part of the programme. Two clauses, however, at once gave rise to anxious thoughts. The first concerned the permanent stay at Petrograd of " the garrison, which had participated in the revolutionary movement," and the second ran, " While conserving strict discipline in the ranks and in the performance of military duties, all restrictions limiting the soldier's enjoyment of all the rights granted to other citizens shall be withdrawn. The Provisional Government considers it a duty to add that it has no intention whatever of using the military situation as a plea for delaying the realisation of the above-mentioned reforms and measures." This point was doubly dangerous. It predetermined the army's participation in political life, which proved fatal to Russia, and reflected the mistrust towards the newly formed Government on the part of those Socialist circles which grouped themselves around the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies under the general title of the Revolutionary Democracy. The Socialists ceded the power to more moderate elements as if recognising their greater maturity or their own incompetence. But from the very first moment they mistrusted them and endeavoured to transmit to the masses this mistrust of the new authority born of the Revolution.

The Provisional Government was organised without any compromise with the autocracy, as a result of a

real all-national democratic movement. Nicholas II. was still Emperor of All the Russias, when a new list of Ministers was drawn up and the draft of the new Constitution outlined in the Duma. More than that. When the Provisional Committee of the Duma, under the chairmanship of Rodzianko, was laying the foundations of a people's government, no one knew which side would prove the stronger. The Petrograd garrison was on the side of Revolution. But these were home units. They had a special psychology of their own. Whither would the front troops turn? What were they thinking of? Were there any units ready to support the Tsar by armed force? Maybe Nicholas II. was leading them against the mutinous capital to transform the victorious Revolution into a mere revolt suppressed by gunfire?

But few believed in such an alternative. When the abdication signed by Nicholas II. came to hand every one received it as something that was long expected and fatally inevitable, and immediately forgot that only yesterday the autocracy had seemed impregnable and the Autocrat inaccessible.

Upon the very day, March 15, when a Provisional Government was formed at Petrograd, Nicholas II. signed his abdication at Pskoff.

The destiny of Russia, the honour of Our heroic army, the good of the people, the entire future of Our beloved Motherland, demand the prosecution of the war at all costs until a victorious end. . . . In these days that are supremely decisive for Russia, We have considered it as a duty laid upon Our conscience to facilitate for Our people the close union and rallying of all popular forces for the purpose of a speedy achievement of victory, and in concert with the Duma We have deemed it good to abdicate from the throne of the Russian Empire, and to divest Ourselves of the supreme power. Not wishing to part with Our beloved

son, We transmit Our inheritance to Our brother the Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich, and give him Our blessing on his ascending the throne of the Russian Empire.

Thus wrote the Tsar in his last Manifesto.

The Duma, which had but recently bent beneath the weight of the Tsar's will, now delegated to him a member of the State Council, A. T. Guchkoff, and a member of the Duma, V. V. Shulgin, with a prepared draft of the abdication edict. The former, although belonging to the Octobrist party, *i.e.* the moderate Constitutionalists, entertained an inveterate and passionate hatred towards the Romanoff family. His restrained, but bold parliamentary speeches had more than once given ample evidence of this sentiment.

The latter, V. V. Shulgin, one of the most gifted and intelligent of the younger Russian politicians, began his political career not only as a monarchist but as a reactionary. The war altered many of Shulgin's views and made him realise the many mistakes and crimes of autocracy. Nevertheless, even when he started for Pskoff to meet the Tsar, his feelings were those of the mingled bitterness and respect of a sincere monarchist. Both messengers who felt so differently towards Nicholas II. were struck by the Tsar's strange indifference to the catastrophic events that had come tumbling on Russia. Asking no questions, making no objection, the Autocrat of All the Russias signed the abdication of the throne of his forefathers, as if he had long known that sooner or later this was bound to happen. Such indifference served as an additional proof that the old régime was already dead and had no supporters. The soldiers who had mutinied at Petrograd attacked no one, struggled against no one. They simply stretched a hand and tore the pall off the face of a dead Tsarism.

Next day, the 16th of March, the Grand Duke

Michael Alexandrovich also signed an abdication, although a provisional one.

> Inspired by the idea, common to all the people, that the good of our Motherland should be considered above all, I have adopted the firm resolve in no wise to assume the supreme power unless such is the will of our great people, when through their representatives in the Constituent Assembly elected by universal suffrage, they establish the form of government and the new fundamental laws of the Russian State.

Meantime the Grand Duke appealed to all citizens "to submit to the Provisional Government formed by the Duma and invested with the full power of control."

With the publication of this document, signed merely with the Christian name, Michael, Russia practically became a Republic, ruled by the Provisional Government.

Individuals and organisations expressed their loyalty to the new power. The Stavka as a whole, followed by the entire commanding staff, recognised the Provisional Government. The Tsarist Ministers and some of the assistant Ministers were imprisoned,[1] but all the other officials remained at their posts. Ministries, offices, banks, in fact the entire political mechanism of Russia never ceased working. In that respect the March *coup d'état* passed off so smoothly, that even then one felt a vague presentiment that this was not the end, that such a crisis could not pass off so peacefully.

In company with officers and generals, the Grand

[1] There had been no order for their arrest. Any one, if so inclined, arrested this or the other Minister and brought him to the Taurida Palace. The prisoners felt in greater safety there than at home, because the revolutionary mob might have easily given way to excesses. But owing to the energy of prominent political leaders the first revolutionary days at Petrograd were but slightly stained with blood, unless separate instances of cruel lynching of policemen are taken into account. Great merit is due to A. Kerensky that owing to his bold and decided action not one of the Ministers, not even the execrated Minister of War, Sukhomlinoff, was killed by the soldiers and sailors.

Dukes presented themselves one after another at the Taurida Palace to declare their allegiance to the revolutionary government.

Even the former Commander-in-Chief, the Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaievich, now Viceroy of the Caucasus, a monarchist not only by birth but by conviction, bowed down before the new régime, and on the 17th of March issued the following order :

> I command all military chiefs, both senior and junior, to announce and explain to all ranks of the army and navy, that after the publication of both acts they must calmly await the testimony of the will of the Russian people, and that it is their sacred duty, by remaining in complete submission to their lawful chiefs, to safeguard our Motherland from her stern foe, and by their valiant deeds to support our Allies in this unprecedented struggle.

From all towns throughout the length and breadth of Russia came tidings of the people's joyful welcome to liberty.

The personal qualities of the members of the Provisional Government helped to strengthen the confidence which it immediately inspired to the country.[1]

At the head of the Government stood Prince George Lvoff. He was known to all Russia as a Zemstvo worker, as the President of the Zemstvo Union. This organisation, which united all the provincial Zemstvos (local government councils), came into being during the war and rendered important services in the task of caring for the sick and wounded soldiers. Prince Lvoff had always held aloof from a purely political life. He

[1] The Provisional Government consisted of the following : Prime Minister, Prince G. E. Lvoff ; Minister of War, A. S. Guchkoff ; Minister for Foreign Affairs, P. N. Milyukoff ; Minister of Finance, M. S. Tereshchenko ; Minister of Agriculture, A. S. Shingareff ; Minister of Justice, A. F. Kerensky ; Minister of Ways and Communications, N. V. Nekrasoff ; Minister of Education, A. A. Manuiloff ; Minister of Commerce and Industry, A. I. Konovaloff ; State Controller, I. Godneff ; Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, V. N. Lvoff.

belonged to no party, and as head of the Government could rise above party issues. Not till later did the four months of his premiership demonstrate the consequences of such aloofness even from that very narrow sphere of political life which in Tsarist Russia was limited to work in the Duma and party activity. Neither a clear, definite, manly programme, nor the ability for firmly and persistently realising certain political problems were to be found in Prince G. Lvoff.

But these weak points of his character were generally unknown.

All rejoiced at having got rid of mercenary, dishonest nonentities, like the Ministers Sukhomlinoff or Protopopoff, and were glad to see an irreproachably honest patriot, such as Prince G. Lvoff always was and will be, placed at last at the head of the Russian Government.

Among the members of the Government Paul Milyukoff was the one who possessed the most strongly marked political individuality. He was a historian, and his works on the history of Russian culture are still looked upon as leading studies in the subject. But his academic career was soon ended. The Tsar's Government regarded P. N. Milyukoff with great suspicion, and he was forbidden to lecture or to reside in university towns. He himself gradually abandoned scientific research and gave himself up to politics, preferring to make history rather than to study it. Milyukoff took an energetic part in the Constitutional movement, when it still bore a conspirative character (before the Treaty of Portsmouth), and after the first revolution in 1905 became one of the leaders of the newly formed Constitutional-Democratic (Cadet) party.

He became the leader of the opposition in the Third and Fourth Dumas, and his speeches caused far greater irritation in Government circles than did the sharper

but narrowly Socialistic speeches of the extreme Left orators.

A man of rare erudition and of an enormous power for work, Milyukoff had numerous adherents and friends, but also not a few enemies. He was considered by many as a doctrinaire on account of the stubbornness of his political views, while his endeavours to effect a compromise for the sake of rallying larger circles to the opposition were blamed as opportunism. As a matter of fact almost identical accusations were showered upon him both from Right and Left. This may partly be explained by the fact that it is easier for Milyukoff to grasp an idea than to deal with men, as he is not a good judge of either their psychology or their character.

Not merely able but honest and courageous, he was one of the first who in the days of boundless revolutionary dreams and raptures uttered warnings against the dangers lurking on all sides, and even had the temerity to declare aloud that it would be better to settle on a constitutional monarchy, without being carried away by the idea of a republic which Russia as yet was incapable of realising.

These words, as well as his persistent and constant reminder that Russia would become free and powerful if only she, together with her Allies, succeeded in completely defeating Germany, gave Milyukoff's enemies the opportunity of raising a campaign against him from the very outset. He also added strength to the enemy's position by emphasising in his statement of war aims that the possession of the Dardanelles was Russia's vital need. This gave the Revolutionary Democracy occasion to clamour about Milyukoff's predatory aspirations and imperialism. During the Revolution all those to the right of him rather supported him. Those to the left feared or even hated him.

Within the Government Milyukoff proved himself to be much weaker than might have been expected. The Cabinet was a Coalition. Out of 11 members, 4 (P. N. Milyukoff, A. S. Shingareff, A. A. Manuiloff, and N. Nekrasoff) belonged to the Cadet party ; 3 (A. Guchkoff, Godneff, and V. N. Lvoff) to the Octobrist party ; A. S. Konovaloff was a Progressist ; 2 (M. Tereshchenko and Prince G. E. Lvoff) were non-party ; and, lastly, A. Kerensky was the only Socialist, but extremely popular at the time. His presence in the Cabinet strengthened the link between the Provisional Government and the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies, where Kerensky was Assistant President of the Central Executive Committee.

A. F. Kerensky and P. Milyukoff presented the two most characteristic and influential figures of the Cabinet. Unfortunately they were divided not merely by a divergence of views, but also by personal ill-will. Kerensky, as the more emotional and impulsive of the two, gave way to this sentiment of enmity and made no endeavours to conceal it even at Cabinet meetings. On his part P. Milyukoff lost no opportunity of emphasising the logical unsteadiness and political immaturity of the Revolutionary Democracy, and incidentally of Kerensky himself, as its gifted representative.

A. F. Kerensky was considerably younger than P. N. Milyukoff. In a revolutionary epoch this is an important privilege, as the stormy vacillations accompanying each upheaval claim great versatility and flexibility from revolutionary leaders. A lawyer by education, A. Kerensky possessed the pleader's superficial eloquence. His speeches in the Duma—he was a member of the Third and Fourth Dumas—were neither profound nor original, yet nevertheless Kerensky occupied a prominent place upon the Left benches,

for in both these Dumas the Socialists were rather feebly represented and lacked prominent members. Although a member of the Social Revolutionary party Kerensky officially belonged to the party of Toil. This was a compulsory conspirative camouflage, for members of the Social Revolutionary party, which employed terroristic methods, were cruelly persecuted by the Tsarist Government. Even before the Revolution A. Kerensky was extremely popular in Socialist circles of various shades. Later, as Head of the Provisional Government, he exhibited the meagreness of his political outlook and the instability and levity of his character. But at the beginning of the Revolution it seemed as if some inner fire had been kindled within him, and he at once became enormously popular. In those early days Kerensky, protecting the honour of the Revolution at the risk of his own life, saved the Tsarist Ministers, whom he hated, from the ever-growing wrath of the mob. This was a magnanimous and daring act. He gave proof of a similar courage when at the risk of losing his rapidly increasing popularity he consented to enter the Provisional Government without asking permission of the Soviet. This was an act of temerity. The Socialists grouped around Chheidze preferred that Prince Lvoff's Cabinet should remain a purely bourgeois one, so that they might assume the position of an irresponsible opposition. But Kerensky first consented to accept a portfolio and then placed before the Soviet a *fait accompli*, forcing their approval of his act by a short but powerful and skilfully framed speech.

In those days his speeches were full of an infectious revolutionary passion. Amid the roar and clamour of the ever-growing popular movement Kerensky rose to heights of real eloquence. And he did not become a tribune, only because he lacked what seems to be the

primary and absolutely necessary quality—the intellect of a statesman. And, it may be, also a more delicate conscience.

Kerensky was perhaps the only member of the Government who knew how to deal with the masses, since he instinctively understood the psychology of the mob. Therein lay his power and the main source of his popularity in the streets, in the Soviet, and in the Government.

Ministers who apparently stood far apart from his political views supported him. Vl. Lvoff, Godneff, Tereshchenko, Konovaloff, and Nekrasoff frequently voted with him, although the first two were formerly far to the right even of the Cadets. Godneff was a colourless Octobrist. Vl. Lvoff was a Monarchist, unintelligent and muddling, who became member of the Government through a sheer misunderstanding. The appointment to the Ministry of M. Tereshchenko was also a chance affair. A young millionaire interested in the theatre and art, he began to take part in public life owing to the war, occupying himself mainly with supplies. Like all the other Ministers of Prince G. Lvoff's Cabinet, M. Tereshchenko was an honest man and a patriot. But he had received neither a political education nor even ordinary political practice. His native intelligence and ability could not protect him against a whole series of most heedless mistakes. The fact that he was made Minister of Finance, without having studied financial questions, added little depth to the ministerial activity of this agreeable young man.

In saying that all the Ministers of the first Cabinet were honest men, I must admit a reserve in the case of N. Nekrasoff. From the very outset he played a double game, manœuvring between the Cadet party, which had brought him out, and those of the Socialist groups which

were acquiring an ever greater influence. His intrigues, bordering on treachery, increased dissension within the Government and weakened it. N. Nekrasoff had a great influence of a negative character over both Kerensky and Tereshchenko. They formed a triumvirate, which at a certain period controlled the whole policy of the Government.

At first Nekrasoff had some influence over A. Konovaloff, who was also on friendly terms with Kerensky. One of the largest manufacturers in Russia, enthusiastic for democratic ideas, A. Konovaloff presented that type of a Radical millionaire (so very characteristic of Russian life) who was ever ready to subsidise a revolution, and not only a political but even a Socialistic movement, although he himself was not a Socialist, but belonged to the small Progressive party. Konovaloff was a sincere and intelligent man, and the Revolution quickly sobered him. As Minister of Commerce and Industry he was one of the first to warn the democracy of the dangerous game of reckless industrial democratisation.

Such were the five Ministers who supported Kerensky. As a matter of fact only three took sides with Milyukoff: A. A. Manuiloff, a professor of political economy, a distinguished specialist, but ill-prepared to weather revolutionary storms; A. Shingareff, who had for years shared with P. Milyukoff all the difficulties of parliamentary struggle and all the tension of party life. A doctor by profession, he became a politician because the autocracy had developed into a disease of which Russia had to be cured at any cost. A. Shingareff possessed the same keen sense of mass psychology as A. Kerensky, although in a lesser degree. Honest, almost to rigidity, he held aloof from all demagogy, yet his popularity grew day by day. He possessed the rare

gift of attracting people, of gaining their goodwill, of imbuing them with his own ideas and frame of mind. He lacked P. Milyukoff's obstinate persistency. And because of that A. Shingareff was better loved and less obeyed.

The third Minister, who generally shared the views of Milyukoff and Shingareff, was A. T. Guchkoff. He and Milyukoff had been political enemies for many years. Once they very nearly fought a duel, thereby disregarding all the traditions of the Russian intelligentsia. But war and revolution compelled them to work together. Both shared the same anxiety to safeguard Russia as a State, and therefore both saw the first task of the Government in securing victory over Germany. Guchkoff, able and well-educated, had long been considered as one of the highest non-professional authorities on military affairs in Russia. As Chairman of the Military Commission of the Duma he had succeeded in drawing up a series of army reforms, a small part of which had been carried out in spite of Sukhomlinoff's resistance.

Great hopes were centred in Prince G. Lvoff's Cabinet upon Guchkoff as Minister of War, for he enjoyed the reputation of being an energetic man. Guchkoff was unable, however, to realise these hopes. He could hardly be blamed for this, for the Revolutionary Democracy, which the Government dealt with very tenderly, directed the main current of its irresponsible revolutionism towards the disintegration of the army.

Neither did the Head of the Provisional Government, Prince G. Lvoff, fulfil all the high expectations centred in him. Whether he succumbed to the then fashionable infatuation with A. Kerensky, or whether Milyukoff's sober directness was personally disagreeable to him, at all events Prince G. Lvoff's vote and influence

strengthened A. Kerensky's group, *i.e.* the Left wing. This involved less struggle and tension, as the common torrent rushed in that direction. Prince G. Lvoff was not a fighter. He liked vagueness and slatternly incompleteness, and for this many had blamed him in the Zemstvo Union. These qualities, carried to the summit of State power, which demanded a clear vision and iron firmness of will, proved to be far more prejudicial than in Zemstvo affairs, where separate individuals and institutions could be granted great independence without any special detriment to the whole, and where one might confidently expect " something to turn up."

Such were the men who formed the first free Russian Government, and such were their inner mutual relations.

What forces did they lean upon, who aided them in their tremendous task of creating a new Government, strong and free, and in the not less difficult task of prosecuting the war with Germany to the end ? And by whom were they hindered ?

### Correction

In Chap. I. p. 24, a mistake has been made in saying that Nicholas II. signed the abdication edict brought him by the members of the Duma—A. Guchkoff and V. Shulgin.

It is true they did bring from Petrograd to Pskov a draft of the abdication, but the Tsar did not sign that, but another manifesto apparently prepared beforehand by some of the officials at the Stavka. This shows that Nicholas II. himself had come to the conclusion that his abdication was inevitable. I base this correction on the words of A. Guchkoff, who came to London when the book was already set up in type.

## CHAPTER II

### PATRIOTISM OR INTERNATIONALISM ?

Whom to obey ?—Parties before the revolution—Liberalism and Cadets —Populist Socialists and Marxists—Order No. I, and persecution of officers—Democratic peace—Soviet and Provisional Government—Bolshevist influence—Dual power.

After the downfall of the old régime even educated people found it difficult to decide in whose hands the new power was now concentrated, while the broad masses were completely baffled. For a time the Taurida Palace was indeed the centre of power. But there were to be found both the Provisional Government and the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies. Later, the Provisional Government settled down in the Marie Palace, forming a sort of third centre. Which of them was to be obeyed ? Who was supreme ? Deputations from the provinces became frequently confused between these three organisations, not knowing to whom to present themselves to express their loyalty to the new régime.

Still more serious was the fact that the Government itself did not actually know whom to lean upon. It did lean, one might say, upon all in general and no one in particular. A Government can be strong only when backed by well-organised public opinion and a well-organised military force. Prince G. Lvoff's Government possessed neither the one nor the other. It was a bourgeois Government in its composition, for the

Cabinet contained only one Socialist Minister, A. Kerensky, but the *bourgeoisie* itself, of which the Soviets stood in such fear, was unorganised. The only numerous non-Socialist party, the "Cadets," could offer a moral and logical resistance to the Socialist whirlwind, but was too weak to give any serious support to the Government.

The Tsarist régime, like every other despotic power, feared its subjects, distrusted them, placed obstacles in the way of every attempt at organisation, of every awakening of intellectual forces. The whole nineteenth century of Russian history is filled with the hard and unequal struggle between the autocracy and the Russian intelligentsia. It was a struggle not merely for political liberty, but also for the right to impart ideas and knowledge to the people. The Government was niggardly and grudging in opening new schools, forbidding private persons to teach the peasants' children without special license, impeding the Zemstvos in their task of public education. That is why in some provinces half the population is still illiterate. A special license was also necessary, but very seldom obtained, for opening a village library, for giving lectures and magic-lantern shows, for organising a choral society, for lending books to read. For venturing on such pernicious courses, people were frequently put into prison or exiled to Siberia.

Even co-operative institutions were placed under suspicion, and while the Ministry of Agriculture encouraged co-operators, the police persecuted and oppressed them.

Any organisation of political parties or meetings in the country was out of the question. This was permitted only to the Union of Russian people. In such wise the vast majority of the population was purposely

kept by the Tsarist Government in complete ignorance of the political needs and the general life of even their native country, while the political workers were artificially estranged from those whom they were both willing and able to serve. When the storm broke out it was found that the intelligentsia, that flower and brain of the nation, were completely severed from the masses. The masses had not the faintest idea of what Russia really was, and of why every citizen must possess both rights and duties within his own country? And most important of all, they had no idea of the meaning of the State and why the existence of a State was necessary for each individual. This latter consideration, as a matter of fact, was but vaguely realised, even by most of the intelligentsia.

Nevertheless, among the thin upper strata of the town population there was some semblance of political life, and political parties became organised; of these, the Duma included about ten. It would be difficult to identify the parties by their social composition, for the division was not one of classes, but of ideas.

The priests, who were fairly numerous in the last Duma, were mostly grouped on the extreme Right benches. But some of them belonged to the Opposition. Not a few landowners, particularly from the rich "black earth" provinces, also belonged to the Right wing. Yet landowners, to whose class had belonged the vast majority of Russian writers and public men, were to be found not only on the Right, but also in the Centre and on the Left. It was the same with the peasants. Only workmen clustered jealously beneath the Marxist banner hoisted upon the extreme Left wing.

The political divisions were manifold. The monarchists were divided into several groups. At the extreme Right were the reactionaries who professed the

long outworn theory of absolute autocracy. They were opposed to any kind of national representation, and although themselves members of the Duma, never made the slightest effort to protect the rights and honour of the Russian Parliament. Some of them belonged to the Union of the Russian People. This was an obscure organisation, which did not scruple to make use of any methods of political struggle, including political murder, and was patronised by the Tsarist Government.

The most prominent of the convinced monarchists was Vl. Purishkevich, a capable man, but unrestrained almost to the point of hooliganism. He became greatly changed during the war. Perhaps the highest proof of both his monarchism and patriotism was given by his participation in Rasputin's murder. Purishkevich submitted to the new régime, realising Russia's urgent need of fundamental reforms. But the Revolution proved that monarchical organisations had no roots whatever in the country. The Tsar received no support, neither from above nor from below. After the Revolution the Right currents were no longer of any importance.

The centre of the Duma was represented by moderately constitutional parties—the Nationalists and the Octobrists. Both of them prized their close relations with the Tsarist Government which helped them during elections and treated them with a certain contemptuous favour. The Octobrist programme was very similar to that of the former Premier, Peter Stolypin. The Octobrists were particularly persistent in their support of Stolypin's agrarian reform, by which he hoped to establish small peasant holdings without the confiscation of private property in land. It seemed probable at one time that the Octobrists might become the Government party, but the Tsar and his councillors proved too self-centred and blind even for that. The

old régime neither would nor could seek serious public support. When the blow fell it was V. Shulgin and A. Guchkoff, the leaders of the two parties which might have been the support of the Throne, who brought to Nicholas II. the Duma's demand that he should sign the act of abdication drafted beforehand by the Duma.

The Left wing of the Duma was represented by Radicals and Socialists. The small group of "Progressists" was sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left of the Cadets. Mischievous tongues said that the Progressists were distinguished from the Cadets simply by their refusal to submit to Milyukoff. But their main distinction lay in their greater readiness to submit to the insinuations and solicitations of the Socialists. Among the members of the Cabinet, A. Konovaloff belonged to the Progressists, but later joined the Cadets. The Progressists were of no real importance in the country.

The only influential and numerous radical party were the Cadets.

It may be considered as one of the special features of Russian political life that owing to the absence of political freedom the Liberal parties in Russia had been formed after the Socialist ones.

Liberalism had been engendered as a movement and a political creed already in the eighteenth century. It became strengthened and acquired a more active, or rather a more revolutionary character after the Napoleonic wars. Both in Russian literature and in Russian political life Liberalism had played an important part. It acquired, however, a serious political importance only at the beginning of the twentieth century, when public forces were drawn to it in a conspirative manner, forming the Union of Liberation. In the October revolution of 1905 the Union of Liberation was trans-

formed into an open party with a definite programme and organisation. This was the party of the People's Liberty or the Constitutional-Democratic party (hence " Ca-dets " from the initial letters).

The party's character is precisely defined by its name. The Cadets were constitutional monarchists, who held that Russia stood in urgent need of wide democratic reforms. In their programme they persistently advocated the principle that the interests of all the people, the interests of Russia as a whole, were above those of a separate class or group. As social reformers the Cadets adopted the Social-Democratic minimum Labour programme. The basis of their economic programme lay in endowing the peasants with land out of the Crown reserves, appanages, church, and private lands. Private lands were to be expropriated from their owners, but compensation given somewhat upon the principle of land resumption for railway or other public purposes. For their scheme of compulsory expropriation the Cadets were attacked from the Right by the landowners, who considered this as a robbery. Socialists attacked them because of the compensation, as they wished to have the land taken for nothing. The Cadets, however, could never agree to such a scheme, as they recognised the right of property as a necessary foundation of contemporary Russia's economic order and development.

Great irritation among the Right parties was also provoked by the Cadets' demand for the granting of a wide cultural and national self-determination to all the peoples inhabiting Russia. The monarchists considered this to be an attempt against the autocratic rights of the Crown and the integrity of the Russian Empire. The Left parties, on the other hand, were displeased that the Cadets did not go as far as the principle of a federa-

tion of Sovereign States, but drew the line at national and regional autonomy.

The foremost and fundamental aim of the Cadet party was the realisation in Russia of a constitutional form of government and the establishment of political liberties. They therefore attached great importance to work in the Duma. The party's history is indissolubly linked up with the brief history of the Russian Parliament, where the Cadets never possessed an absolute majority but always occupied a prominent place. The most powerful speeches denouncing the imperfection of the Tsarist régime resounded from the Cadet benches, for the Cadets numbered many brilliant speakers (Rodicheff, Milyukoff, Maklakoff, Shingareff, Nabokoff, Kokoshkin). Such speeches raised the prestige of the Duma, and if in the days of revolutionary exaltation the crowd rushed to the Taurida Palace, thereby proving its trust in national representation, one may boldly assert that the Cadets had done much to create such confidence.

The Cadet party had never been in power, it always filled the place of a responsible Opposition. But when the war broke out the Cadets declared at once that all differences and contradictions were to be sunk in the common task of national defence and the struggle against German militarism. Their behaviour had an important influence upon the attitude of Russian public opinion and united all forces around the cause of defence.

In all its stormy and difficult political career the Cadet party never once changed either its programme or its leaders and never split into factions, always remaining one. Only one serious alteration of the programme was adopted after the Revolution and the Tsar's abdication; the Cadets recognised the desirability of a republic in lieu of a constitutional monarchy.

Such was the radical party.

The Socialists were divided into two principal groups —the Populist Socialists and the Marxists. They were not united. Their fundamental divergence lay in that the former group idealised the muzhik and held that, owing to the village commune, the Russian peasant was a potential Socialist, and that once the land should become common property the most important step towards reaching the Socialist order of society would be accomplished. For decades such ideas were developed in Russian literature, and entire generations of Russian youths were brought up upon this idealisation of the people.

In contrast with these views the Social-Democrats expounded the ideas of Karl Marx, asserting that Russia, like other peoples, was bound to pass through various stages of economic development. They considered the factory-workers to be best fitted to be the bearers of advanced Socialist ideas, and made the dictatorship of the proletariat one of their primary aims.

Marxism made its appearance in Russia as a definite political force only in the 'eighties of the last century. One of its chief Russian sponsors was the *emigré*, G. Plekhanoff, a gifted publicist and polemist. Simultaneously, with him, three young economists, who rapidly became prominent, opened the struggle against the Populist Socialists, opposing the Marxian doctrine, which to them seemed scientifically proved, to the Utopia of their rivals. These three were Michael Tugan-Baranovsky, Peter Struve, and Vladimir Ulianoff Lenin. Later, each of them went his own way, but they appeared on the political arena underneath a common Marxian banner.

The two principal Socialist parties were divided into several groups, and these groups were split into factions.

From the Populist Socialists originated the Party of

Toil and the Social-Revolutionaries. The former came into being in the days of the first Duma, where it represented a motley and chaotic mixture of peasants, little accustomed to literary intricacies, but eager to get the land, and of an idealistically benevolent Socialist intelligentsia, to whom the peasant represented the very essence of wisdom. During the second Revolution the Party of Toil became merged in a group of literary Populist Socialists led by the two editors of a very popular review—*Russkoie Bogatstvo*—B. Miakotin and A. Peshekhonoff. They formed a moderate Populist Socialists' Party of Toil, which had no influence either during elections or upon the masses.

On the other hand, the Social-Revolutionary party acquired at once tremendous influence and a wide sphere of action. Its trump card lay in its agrarian programme expressed by the brief mottoes: "The land is the Lord's" and "All the land to all the people."

Translated into less picturesque language, this signified that all land, whether belonging to the State, appanages, monasteries, or private owners, was to be merged into a State land fund, whence each toiler might receive his share. Land property is confiscated without compensation. Private possession of land is abolished. Land can neither be sold nor inherited.

The nationalisation of factories is not mentioned in the Social-Revolutionary programme. Politically, the Social-Revolutionaries always advocated a federative Russian republic. The composition of the party was extremely varied. School teachers and small intelligentsia became affiliated with it. The more prominent leaders numbered several important Moscow Jewish merchants.

Psychologically the Social-Revolutionary party attracted persons with a more romantic turn of mind who

were repelled by the dry Marxian doctrine of economic materialism. Maybe the dangers and adventures that its tactics involved served as an inducement to others. Holding that historical events are vitally influenced by the personality of those in power the Social-Revolutionaries were terrorists, and before the Revolution had committed several political assassinations. Gentle visionaries and poets, deeming that isolated heroic deeds and sacrifices could revolutionise the world, frequently became the executors of such terroristic acts. The Social-Revolutionaries attached great importance to political liberty and led an active and self-denying struggle against autocracy. When the longed-for hour of freedom struck they were naturally bound to fill a prominent place among other political parties.

When the Social Revolutionaries assembled at Petrograd from Siberia and from exile abroad, where many of them had been compelled to live for years, it became apparent that this was not one united party firmly bound together by a common political outlook and a unity of leadership, but rather a chaotic mixture of various tendencies and individuals of far from equal morality. The Social-Revolutionaries were divided into those of the Right, the Centre, and the Left. These groups were also split up into various factions which need not be described in detail, but which increased the vagueness and disorderliness of Social-Revolutionary policy. The Right wing was composed of the so-called Social-Revolutionary patriots. To them belonged the old revolutionary Mme. Breshko-Breshkovskaja, Lebedeff, Boris Savinkoff, and finally Kerensky. The Centre was led by Victor Chernoff, an ambitious publicist, a demagogue, unscrupulous in his speeches and methods. On the Left was a group of Social-Revolutionary Maximalists with the hysterical Marie Spiridonova at their

head. The true substance of these factions and their leaders was mainly defined by their attitude in relation to the war and to Bolshevism.

At the beginning of the Revolution the Bolsheviks were not yet considered a separate party, but formed part of the United All-Russian Labour Social-Democratic party, as the Russian Marxists styled themselves. The party became divided into Mensheviks and Bolsheviks in 1903 at a party conference filled with the usual squabbling over formulas and words. Lenin, who demanded that the party should adopt more revolutionary, or, as was then termed, Blanquist tactics, asserted that he had behind him the majority of the delegates (hence the term "Bolsheviks"—majority). Others declared that Lenin had falsified the representation of provincial committees, a trick to which Lenin was much inclined. However, in spite of that, he and his adherents stubbornly insisted that their adversaries who supported the evolutionary method were in the minority (hence the term "Mensheviks"—minority). From that time on both these groups waged a constant strife within the party, but outwardly held together, attaching great value to their external unity. Their divergencies were mainly concerned with questions of tactics and party organisation. The programme was identical for both groups. It was the programme of international Social-Democracy. Some supplements and alterations were introduced into the agrarian programme merely in order to keep pace with the Social-Revolutionaries. Lenin, however, attaching great value to the growth of the proletariat, was against the transference of the land to the peasants.

During the first Revolution (1905) the Bolsheviks employed such questionable methods of struggle and exhibited such a low standard of political morality

that it seemed as if the Mensheviks ought sharply to sever all ties with their comrades of the Left. But as the Bolsheviks were much more dexterous in gaining access to the masses, the Mensheviks still clung to them in order not to lose touch with the workmen, and therefore became co-partners in the spreading of Bolshevist poison.

It was hard for the Mensheviks to sever relations with the Bolsheviks, when both the Right and Left wings of the party set out the theory of class-war as the immutable law of life in every human society. They were bound to deny the principle of nationality, as the proletarians have no fatherland. The dictatorship of the proletariat constituted their primary aim. True, the Mensheviks differed from the Bolsheviks in their estimate of the proper moment: they held that the Social revolution ought not to be precipitated since it was necessary first to consolidate political liberty by passing through the stage of a bourgeois republic, but the ultimate aim of concentrating all the economic life in the hands of the State was common to both.

Within their own house, at party conferences, Mensheviks sometimes indulged in passionate arguments with Bolsheviks. But apparently considering their differences as purely family matters, they attached no significance to them whatever, and thought not of a separation but rather of complete fusion.

On his return from Siberian exile, Tsereteli hastened to declare in one of his earliest speeches, " Factions no longer exist. Bolsheviks and Mensheviks are united. All are ranged in one Revolutionary Democracy."

Besides these two principal Social-Democratic factions there existed also a group of Internationalists, which stood to the Left of the Mensheviks and but slightly differed from the Bolsheviks. Its leader was Martoff-

Zederbaum, who returned to Russia with Lenin through Germany and held views closely akin to Lenin's.

Standing beside them, or rather set aside by them, was the Group of Unity organised by G. Plekhanoff. He was contemptuously called the Social-patriot because he warned the people of the German peril and demanded the prosecution of war to the end. His was not revolutionary, but evolutionary Marxism. Plekhanoff was sufficiently intelligent, well-educated and honest to know that it was impossible to step straight from the Empire of Nicholas II. into the reign of Marx. His views differed so entirely from those of the Executive Committee, that supreme organ of the Soviet, that Plekhanoff was not admitted to its membership. Yet Lenin, Zinovieff, Trotsky, even Radek, an Austrian, were elected, although the rest of the Socialists were perfectly aware of their political immorality. They did not, however, consider honesty and integrity as being the foremost and indispensable qualities of any man, still less so of a politician.

Such were, broadly outlined, the principal parties and political tendencies existing in Russia at the moment of the Revolution. At that time they only included the numerically insignificant educated and literate upper circles. Whereas an enormous majority, tens of millions of citizens, who would soon be called upon to fashion the State's and their own destinies by means of voting papers, knew nothing of these parties, and were utterly incapable of distinguishing one from another.

Very soon, however, setting aside party divisions and subdivisions, the political thoughts and will of the people began to concentrate themselves on the two fundamental problems—the war, and the character of the new order.

On the one side were the defencists, who held that the war must be carried on to a victorious end, and that the Revolution should be political, but not social. This standpoint was defended by the Cadets, and Socialists of the Right, the Populist-Socialists as well as the " Unity " group. At the head of this movement stood the Committee of the Duma. Towards them turned the Officers and Generals. Former *emigrés* and revolutionaries, like the anarchist, Prince Kropotkin, Herman Lopatin, Pankratoff, and others, at the risk of losing their popularity supported the defencist movement. Their patriotic task was complicated by the fact that they found themselves obliged to refute the tempting watchwords of the other Socialists, and to agree upon many points not merely with the Cadets, but also with the Octobrists and conservatively disposed Generals. Demagogues skilfully availed themselves of this opportunity to incite the masses against all conceptions of national Socialism.

The watchwords of the opposite side were the liquidation of the war and the deepening of the Revolution, *i.e.* a realisation of Socialist aims by means of a further revolution.

An enormous majority of the rank and file and the Central Committees of both the important Socialist parties—the Social-Democrats and the Social-Revolutionaries—whose chief stronghold was the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workmen's Deputies, represented the second tendency. In relation to the war they stood not for defence, but for a democratic peace, concluded with the aid of the united international proletariat, including the Austro-German proletariat.

Russia's tragedy lay in the fact that the Revolution broke out amid the complications of an exhausting war, which had to be carried on at all costs to a victorious

end to save the country from slavery and destruction. And it so happened that the revolutionary leaders were semi-defeatists who had remained concealed in the rear, Socialists whose minds were filled with the doctrines of Marx to the exclusion of patriotism, or else actual defeatists like Chheidze. For three years Chheidze made speeches in the Duma on the necessity of liquidating the war as soon as possible, and in spite of this, or it may be for this very reason, he was elected President of the Petrograd Soviet. For, in the early days of the Revolution, the word "Motherland" was banned by the Socialist majority. The Revolutionary Democracy shrugged its shoulders contemptuously even when such popular Socialist writers as Vladimir Korolenko sounded the warning that "the Motherland was in danger."

Korolenko wrote a passionate appeal to the Democracy, imploring them to forget all quarrels, because "the same cloud which of yore threatened Russia from the east is now approaching from the west. . . . The Hohenzollern wants Russia to remain for long obscure and oppressed. . . ." But patriotic speeches, whatever their origin, awoke no response from the Revolutionary Democracy. On the contrary, as if a prey to some spiritual perversion fatal to Russia, the majority of the Socialists behaved with extreme suspicion towards all defencists, even when they were Socialists. The idea of a struggle against Germany became in the mentality of the Left mysteriously linked with the idea of a struggle against the Revolution. This may be partly explained by the hypnotic influence of German ideas through the medium of Social-Democracy, through faith in the Internationalist sentiments of the German proletariat, and through the utterly unfounded fear of a counter-revolution which haunted the Socialists from the very first days. It would not

be an exaggeration to say that counter-revolution was infinitely more terrible to them than the Kaiser. That is why they were incapable of safeguarding the army.

The Government had barely been established when on the 14th of March the Soviet issued its famous Order No. 1. It was addressed to the Petrograd garrison, but was sent out in millions of copies to all units at the front and in the rear, and served as a signal for the disintegration of the Russian Army. The Soviet ordered all military units "to proceed immediately to the election of committees composed of representatives of the rank-and-file." Delegates of these committees were incorporated in the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies, which was to be called henceforth the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies. All arms were to be taken over and controlled by the Soldiers' Committees and under no circumstances to be handed over to officers, not even at their express demand.

By this order the Soviet destroyed discipline at one stroke, subordinating officers to the privates and heedlessly introducing the elective principle into the army.

Certainly no one would have the boldness to assert that discipline might not have been destroyed in the Russian Army by the Revolution merely taking its course. But even a revolution, whatever its likeness to a storm, an earthquake, or collective insanity, still contains some elements of intelligent purpose. As a man in a fit of passion may sometimes be prevented from committing a crime, so in a revolution the appeal of wisdom, of conscience, or honour, sometimes restrained the mob when it was on the verge of committing a collective crime. The leading organs of Revolutionary Democracy, as the Soviets had styled themselves from the very outset, should have reflected both in word and

deed the highest standard of Socialist and Revolutionary intelligence. They constituted the brain, and it was their duty to give a wise lead to the people's newly awakened will for freedom, and not to submitting to blind elemental forces. But in social questions, as well as in their attitude towards the war, the Russian Socialists showed no evidence of any statesmanlike or constructive wisdom. Not only did they not endeavour to retain the discipline and with it the fighting efficiency of the army, but in a sort of frenzied blindness they scattered the seeds of strife and corruption throughout the army.

Both Order No. 1 and all the subsequent behaviour of the Soviet was penetrated with a distrust of the officers. Although the Stavka and the entire commanding staff had immediately recognised the authority of the Provisional Government, the Soviet had nevertheless placed all officers under suspicion. On the very day when the Soviet adopted its appeal to the peoples of the world, breathing the love of international peace, rancorous speeches against the officers of the Russian Army were being uttered at a Soviet meeting. A petty journalist, Stekloff (Nakhamkes), one of those who had found shelter from the war behind an office desk, now as a member of the Soviet thundered against the former Tsarist Stavka, which according to him was a centre of counter-revolution. "Rebellious generals, not wishing to submit to the will of the Russian people, are openly conducting an agitation among the soldiers. We have demanded that the Provisional Government proclaim beforehand as outlaws all those rebellious generals who dare thus to raise their miserable, sacrilegious arm. It is not only every officer's but every soldier's, every citizen's right and duty to kill him before he raises his arm."

This speech, with its incitement to bloodshed, with its criminal appeal to the soldiers to murder the commanders, was greeted with applause by the Soviet, and printed in the *Soviet Izvestia*, No. 18.

The occasion of the speech was a proclamation of the Minister of War, Guchkoff, and the Commander-in-Chief, General Alexeieff, reminding the army that "Russia is menaced with fresh trials. We are faced by stern dangers from the enemy." If the soldiers do not retain a strong military discipline, "the army will cease to be a menace to the enemy, and will easily become its prey. Any one who tells you otherwise, who incites you to disorder and to disobedience of your superiors, is a traitor to his country, working to the German's profit and Russia's destruction." The army leaders insisted that officers should remain in command of their units. "The orders of the Provisional Government alone are compulsory for the army, for divided control will lead to complete disruption" (March 23).

That prophecy has, as we know, been fulfilled. But the Soviet groups did not understand the language of statesmen. Imbued with the Marxian doctrine of class-war, they immediately applied narrow party dogmas to all national problems, and bent all their energies to discover the lurking-place of the imperialist and capitalist counter-revolution which they were bound to fight.

And since the first Provisional Government was above all a defencist government, it was immediately placed under suspicion.

A few days after its formation, the Provisional Government issued a manifesto beginning with the following words:

> The sublime work is accomplished. The powerful impulse of the Russian people has overthrown the old order. A new

free Russia is born. The great upheaval has crowned the long years of struggle.

Ratifying their original promise of calling a Constituent Assembly within the shortest possible period of time and of meanwhile embodying all the political liberties in legal forms, the Government of Prince Lvoff pointed out the necessity of defending the country from the outward enemy.

The Government believe that the same spirit of lofty patriotism that was exhibited by the people in their struggle against the old régime will inspire our gallant soldiers upon the field of battle. The Government will for its own part do everything in its power to provide our Army with all necessary supplies to bring the War to a victorious end. The Government will strictly adhere to all alliances which bind us to other Powers, and will unswervingly fulfil all agreements with our Allies. (March 19.)

An appeal to the army, signed by Prince Lvoff and the Minister of War and Marine, Guchkoff, was issued simultaneously. It appeared in a measure as an answer to the fatal Order No. 1.

Russia firmly believes that the Army, inspired by the lofty spirit of patriotism, will immovably preserve the foundations of its power: unity, and a firm internal order of authority and subordination. No alteration of the military order and command can take place otherwise than by order of the Provisional Government, or by the supreme military authorities acting on their behalf. . . . The subordination of soldiers to officers constitutes the foundation of the Army's might and the country's safety. The collapse of such submission would hurl the Army and the nation into an abyss of destruction. This shall not be.

Such was the Provisional Government's view of its own and the army's duties. But the Soviet pursued totally different aims and spoke a different language.

On March 27 the Soviet issued an address to the

Peoples of the World, filled with revolutionary ardour and faith in a world revolution :

> We declare the time ripe for the beginning of a decisive struggle against the predatory tendencies of the Governments of all countries. The time has come for the peoples to take into their own hands the decision concerning War and Peace. Filled with the consciousness of its revolutionary might, the Russian democracy declares that it will use every means to oppose the predatory policy of its governing classes, and summons the peoples of Europe to combined action in favour of peace.

Turning to the Germans, the Petrograd Soviet invited them to " overthrow the yoke of a semi-autocratic order," declaring at the same time that it will " staunchly defend its own liberty against all reactionary attempts, whether from within or from without."

The entire document exactly reflects the naïve and magniloquent exaltation of the first stage of the Russian Revolution, and strikes one by its complete absence of any consciousness of external danger.

These men, dazed by their own catchwords and the crowd's applause, had ceased to hear the rumble of guns upon the as yet distant German front. Any reminder of the fact that the enemy occupied a vast stretch of Russian territory, that only after driving him back to the German frontiers could any talk of a democratic peace become possible, was looked upon as unseemly Imperialism.

Other watchwords sounded from the Left wing : revision of treaties, clear statement of war - aims, immediate armistice, fraternisation.

And it was not easy to distinguish which of the Socialist factions supported these demands as a whole, and which did not ; or how far were they due to Bolshevist influence. All the Socialists, with the exception of the Social-Patriots, were rather closely associated

with each other, and endeavoured not so much to clear up as to smooth over their existing differences.

The Social-Revolutionaries always called the Bolsheviks their "comrades-in-idea," and agreed with them upon the main issues. At the Congress of Soviets in May, the Social-Revolutionary leader, V. Chernoff, addressing himself to Lenin, said quite rightly, "My appetite is not less than the appetites of the Bolsheviks." Though not Marxists, the Social-Revolutionaries advocated class-war, and at their Petrograd conference in May carried a resolution defining their attitude to both the crucial questions, those of War and Revolution. "It has become the happy lot of the Russian people to be the first skirmisher in the transfer of the front from without to within, in the sacred task of transforming the military into a revolutionary crisis."

Still closer were the ties which bound the Bolsheviks to other Marxian factions. Bolshevist Maximalism, alluring by its successes in easy popularity and the imagined possibility of a speedy realisation of Socialist ideals, was filtering through all circles of the Revolutionary Democracy. Common points of departure in the Marxian programme and similarity of revolutionary traditions were the threads which bound all Socialists firmly to their Socialist centre, *i.e.* the Soviet, which included both Social-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats. But as gradually through Soviet speeches and the Soviet Press, Bolshevist ideas became increasingly, not assimilated, but caught up by the masses, the position of the Socialist Centre became more and more difficult. The very walls of the Taurida Palace seemed to shriek: "The Revolution is not over! Deepen the Revolution!" But such a call was binding, it pushed the Soviet along a certain definite road, and in the end drove it into an impasse and confronted it

with contradictions whose only solution lay in a fresh catastrophe.

Accustomed as they were to living in an atmosphere of an abstract and irresponsible dogmatism, the leaders of the Soviet were in continual fear of departing from that programme of which the main principles were the struggle against the *bourgeoisie* and the seizure of power by or, more correctly, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Bolsheviks took advantage of the doctrinal susceptibilities of their comrades, and it was no easy task for Socialists of the Centre to object when the Bolsheviks demanded the transfer of power to the Soviets.

The first Soviet would not agree to this. It had participated together with the Committee of the Duma in the formation of the Provisional Government, thereby in a way guaranteeing its support to the Cabinet. As a matter of fact neither the Socialist parties nor the Petrograd Soviet as their mouthpiece offered any confidence or support to Prince Lvoff's Cabinet. They declared with reserve that they trusted the Government in so far as it defended and confirmed the "conquests of the Revolution." This was a vague and variable notion, and such support might be withdrawn at any moment. Even Tsereteli, one of the more statesmanlike Social-Democrats, declared in the Soviet: "The fullness of executive power must belong to the Provisional Government in so far as such power tends to strengthening the Revolution" (April 3).

In mid-April the first conference of Soviets, after prolonged and passionate debates concerning the bourgeois character of Prince Lvoff's Cabinet, adopted a lengthy resolution of warning. The conference recognised that the programme published by the Government at the time of its formation "contains the

fundamental political claims of Russian democracy, and that so far the Provisional Government as a whole is following a general course leading towards the fulfilment of its accepted obligations." It seemed but natural that such a declaration would be followed by a vote of confidence and support. But the dogmatic necessity of fighting the *bourgeoisie* prevented the Soviet Socialists from adopting the only wise and statesmanlike decision, therefore they added: "The Conference invites the Democracy, without accepting responsibility for the activity of the Government as a whole, to support the Provisional Government in so far as it infallibly advances in the direction of a consolidation and a widening of the conquests of the Revolution, and in so far as its foreign policy is based upon a rejection of predatory tendencies. In order to force the Government to submit to the will of the Revolutionary Democracy, the latter must rally around the Soviets of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates as being the organised centres of democracy created by the Revolution." This was necessary, it was explained, for the realisation of the following clause of the resolution:

> The Conference recognises the urgency of a constant political control and pressure to be exercised by the Revolutionary Democracy on the Provisional Government and its local agents for the purpose of stimulating them to energetic struggle against counter-revolutionary forces, to decisive steps towards the entire democratisation of Russian life, and towards the preparation of a universal peace without annexations and indemnities, based upon the self-determination of the peoples.

This decision placed the Government under control of the Soviets, which, after all, were a perfectly chaotic organisation, whose composition and rights were most marvellously ill-defined.

But even before this decision was taken, the irresponsible politicians of the Soviet interfered in all affairs of State, both civil and military. Regimental committees organised by them were disrupting the army. The *Izvestia* was frantically attacking Generals, especially the Commander-in-Chief, Alexeieff. In a despatch of April 14, from Headquarters, General Alexeieff announced :

> A number of enemy deserters give evidence that the Germans and Austrians hope that various organisations working inside Russia and at present impeding the work of the Provisional Government will produce anarchy throughout the country, and demoralise the Russian Army.

In response to this the entire Left Press raised a campaign against the Generalissimo. Even the Menshevist *Labour Gazette* (*Rabochaya Gazeta*) declared that these were "counter-revolutionary tendencies," and expressed the hope that the Provisional Government "will be able to show Headquarters its proper place." A series of coarse articles, of senselessly insolent resolutions concerning officers and Generals, were published in the Socialist papers, which were read with avidity by soldiers at the front. The Socialist Press repeated over and over again that a revolution was beginning in Germany. This was said in the *Pravda*, the *Izvestia*, and in the German leaflets which the German aviators scattered in the Russian trenches. The *Izvestia* wrote in the beginning of April (No. 27) :

> The *bourgeoise* papers never cease to talk about the peril menacing Russia from Germany, and attribute our military reverses to our internal strife. . . . They want to persuade the soldiers of the necessity of going on with the War.

The necessity of carrying on the war was urged both by the Provisional Government and by the Generals

whom it had placed at the head of the army. Accordingly the preposterous assertions that the war could be ended without fighting prejudiced the soldiers' confidence, not so much in the bourgeois Press as in the Government and the officers. Generals demanded discipline and self-restraint. The Soviets demanded nothing and promised everything. No wonder the Russian soldier's head was turned and that he felt drawn towards the Soviet and away from the Government.

As early as March 21, the Soldiers' Section of the Soviet declared, "Military units may be led out of Petrograd to their former places of encampment by order of the Minister of War countersigned by the Executive Committee." In other words, military units were subordinated not to the military authorities but to the Soviet.

The Soviet exercised a jealous surveillance over the Government's activity. When the Minister of Finance insistently urged them to support the Liberty Loan, they procrastinated for weeks, unable to decide whether they ought to support it or not, so slightly conscious were they of their ties with the Russian State. Yet when at the beginning of the Revolution the papers mentioned that the Government intended to send the Tsar and his family over to England, the Soviet immediately interfered. The *Izvestia* (No. 13) published a report of a Soviet meeting, at which N. Sokoloff[1] (a Social-Democrat) announced the measures adopted to prevent Nicholas II.'s departure:

> We have mobilised all military units subjected to our influence, and have rendered the situation such as actually to make it impossible for Nicholas II. to leave Tsarskoe-Selo without our

[1] N. D. Sokoloff, a lawyer of rather limited intelligence, who acquired a shameful celebrity as one of the authors of Order No. 1.

consent; we have wired along all railway lines that every railway organisation, each station-master, every group of railway-workmen, is bound to detain Nicholas II.'s train whenever and wherever it may appear.

In such a manner, setting the Government aside and frequently acting in conflict with its intentions, the Soviet Committee issued independent orders paralysing the new-born power, which was still too weak even to struggle for its independence. For instance, Sokoloff declared in the course of the same speech that "the Government which had at first somewhat hesitated, subsequently found itself obliged to sanction all our actions."

In order to prevent the Government from doing anything disagreeable to the Soviet in future, a "Contact Commission" was elected consisting of five members (Skobeleff, Stekloff-Nakhamkes, Sukhanoff-Gimmer, Filipovsky, and Chheidze), which "by exercising constant organised pressure was to force the Government to execute all and sundry demands" (words uttered by Stekloff at the same meeting of the Soviet, March 22). This commission did not take part in the Cabinet meeting but came to the Marie Palace, where mixed meetings were arranged between Ministers and members of the Executive Committee.

The Provisional Government denied the existence of a dual authority, and when delegates from the front presenting themselves to Prince Lvoff said that the front was disturbed by rumours of a dual authority, the Ministers hastily reassured them. Kerensky announced in April: "Complete unity of aims and purpose exists between the Provisional Government and the Soviet. The Provisional Government is invested with the fullness of power" (*Izvestia*, No. 40). And Tsereteli announced at the conference of Soviets:

"Only irresponsible circles can speak of dual authority. Only one order is now conceivable in Russia, and that is Revolutionary Order. The Provisional Government as the responsible organ of the *bourgeoisie* now stands in the same path" (April 21).

But, as a matter of fact, from the very first days of the Revolution the new régime was double-headed. Such acute difference in relation to the fundamental problems of the political reconstruction of Russia existed between these two groups that any compromise became impossible. The Bolsheviks proved to be the ballast which heeled the whole ship to the Left. They were, however, only able to do so because the Revolutionary Democracy was closely akin to them. At first the Bolsheviks had no real success in Soviet circles, and the political aspirations and doctrines of the Soviet Centre followed an independent course of development. The Bolshevist current was only one of many factors, and far from being the most important one.

But when Lenin, Trotsky, Zinovieff, and many other less known but none the less pernicious Bolsheviks appeared upon the scene, they drew the rest of the Socialists, day by day and step by step, ever further to the Left. And, first and foremost, they started to prepare for the seizure of power, availing themselves of every means within their reach: of the violence and vagueness of the rising popular forces, German aid, the weakness of the more statesmanlike elements, and the general weariness of a poverty-stricken, ignorant people exhausted by the double burden of an evil Tsarist régime and the terrible military tension; and, finally, of the blindness of their Socialist comrades.

## CHAPTER III

### LENIN AND HIS WATCHWORD

Triumphal entry of Lenin—Propaganda of Bolshevism—The dancer's house—German support of Lenin's doctrines—Lenin's estimate of other Socialists.

LENIN made his triumphant entry into Petrograd in the clear spring night of April 16, 1917.

The *Izvestia of Workmen's and Soldiers' Soviets*, the official organ of the Soviets, gives the following description of the event: "Lenin appears in the square. The sea of faces surges and sways. Searchlights cross the place from end to end, illumining the waving banners and the multitude, who welcome the newly-arrived veteran of the revolution with deafening cheers. The people demand a speech, and Lenin makes his first address to the revolutionary proletariat of Petrograd." Lenin then enters not an ordinary but an armoured motor-car and drives away.

This lengthy description is full of respect and enthusiasm. The editors of the *Izvestia* naturally have a perfect knowledge of Lenin's views, they also know perfectly well that he has passed through Germany, but their friendly ardour is by no means cooled. He is a revolutionist and a Marxist. That is the main point, the rest does not much matter.

Vladimir Ilyich Ulianoff-Lenin is, certainly, above all a revolutionist.

The son of a schoolmaster belonging to the nobility of the Simbirsk province, he became a conspirator in his university days. Towards the end of the 'eighties his brother took part in an unsuccessful attempt on the life of Alexander III. and was condemned to death. Vladimir Ulianoff, who most frequently wrote under the pseudonym of Lenin, had also undergone persecution, had been in prison and in Siberia after the usual fate of the Russian intelligentsia. From exile he escaped abroad and was an *émigré* for many years. When the revolution of 1905–6 broke out he returned, then fled once more abroad. A man of cold and scholarly intellect, he began by writing several works upon economics, but soon became totally absorbed in party journalism and party struggles in all their polemic, tactical, and organising details.

He was a Marxist for whom the theory of the class-struggle was an irrefutable dogma, entitling its adepts to hold in contempt all scruples of conscience and all demands of logic. From his youth his revolutionary work was characterised by the spirit of cold intrigue and by the cruel arrogance of a man convinced that he was the bearer of absolute truth, and, therefore, absolved from all moral obligations.

Ambitious and domineering, utterly unscrupulous in his choice of means, Lenin acted upon the principles of *Divide et impera* and sowed discord among his own party. It was he who broke up the party into the two factions of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks at the beginning of the twentieth century. The difference between those factions lies chiefly in their tactics, or rather in their moral standard. The Bolsheviks, who were Maximalists, did not admit of any political compromise, and demanded the immediate realisation of Marxist doctrines. But they admitted all kinds of moral compromise and

were on easy terms with conscience. Members of the "Okhrana" (the Imperial secret police) were more often to be found among the Bolsheviks than among the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks, moreover, were not overscrupulous as to breaches of criminal law, only that they dignified robbery by calling it expropriation. Between the various factions at all Social-Democratic party conferences and in the party Press, dissension was the invariable rule, but, officially, the party still remained one. The general public knew little of these theoretical differences, for till the downfall of Tsarism all Socialists were persecuted. All alike were obliged to wear a mask, to plot and hide, and use underhand methods for propaganda and organisation. This developed habits of deceit, concealment, and evasion, and imparted a strange bias to the character of a multitude of Russian Socialists. They became estranged from real life; they lost the sense of political responsibility and statesmanship. Special types were evolved in this constant shifting from prison into Siberia, from Siberia to life in exile, in an all-pervading atmosphere of persecution and conspiracy. Some were true martyrs of their idea, strong, clean-minded men of delicate conscience. But not a few were unscrupulous, devoid of all moral standards, revelling in intrigues and conspiracies.

The Jesuit motto—the aim justifies the means—explains much in Lenin's life: his attitude towards his comrades, his party intrigues, his unscrupulousness in money matters, his relations with Germany, and his entire conduct as dictator. His aim is to kindle a universal social revolution, and, knee-deep in mire and blood, he marches towards its realisation with the cold ardour of fanaticism and insatiable ambition. Yet in justice to him it must be said that no sooner did he make his appearance in Russia than he openly announced his

Bolshevist programme. Ways and means remained obscure, nor did he consider it necessary to make them clear and clean, but his theories and plans, his conception of the Socialistic problems of the hour, were made perfectly definite. If for months the rest of the Russian Socialists of various shades zealously endeavoured to draw a veil over the Bolshevist tendencies of his demands, as well as to blot out the dark stains upon his past career, he was not to blame. By so doing, they not only became responsible for his activity, but led astray millions of simple folk who were incapable of unravelling the subtleties of intelligentsia politics. Yet the people felt something was wrong. At first when Bolshevist influence was still slight, protests against certain Bolshevist watchwords or the Bolshevist actions of individuals might be heard even from crowds of soldiers.

Such a protest was the resolution carried a few days after Lenin's triumphant entry into Petrograd by the sailors of the 2nd Baltic Company, who had formed the guard of honour at the railway station : " Having learnt that Lenin has returned to Russia by gracious permission of His Majesty, the Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia, we deeply regret having taken part in his triumphant entry into Petrograd."

But the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies exhibited a marvellous tolerance in regard to the Imperial German Government's peculiar courtesy towards Lenin and his friends. And this condescension was not fortuitous. It reflected the attitude of many Socialistic groups towards Germany. They regarded her not as an enemy to be fought to the death, but rather as a friend led astray, whom, perhaps, it might be possible to persuade. And why not accept the services of a friend ?

This question was persistently evaded at the Soviet meetings. Indignant protests were drowned in the

speeches of more complacent comrades. In any case, Lenin, though he demanded the publication of the Russian secret treaties, never on his own part revealed the mystery of his own first agreement with the Kaiser.

In April, a month, that is, after the outbreak of the Revolution, *Nedyelia*, the Austrian organ for propaganda among the Russian troops, wrote concerning Lenin: "The Provisional Government is willing to force the New Russia under the yoke of an Anglo-French dictatorship, but these opportunists are confronted by an honest and staunch antagonist—Lenin, the true friend of the Russian people." This eulogy was reprinted in Russian papers, but the Soviet's attitude towards Lenin remained unchanged.

Lenin's appearance upon the scene caused the extreme Socialist wing at once to raise its head. Now they possessed a leader, clever, resolute, not overscrupulous. It was far easier for them now to urge their views in the Soviet and also in the Executive Committee of the Social-Democratic party which was already strongly Bolshevist in its tendencies. All their main points had been made clear even before Lenin's arrival.

A manifesto of the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic party had been published in the first number of the *Izvestia of the Petrograd Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies*. It ran thus:

> The immediate and pressing task of the Provisional Revolutionary Government consists in establishing relations with the proletariat of belligerent countries in order to organise a revolutionary struggle of all the peoples against their tyrants and oppressors, against all monarchical Governments and capitalistic gangs; and also to put an end to the bloody slaughter forced upon the enslaved peoples.

A similar resolution was passed on March 24 by the Moscow Social-Democratic Committee: "The Pro-

visional Government, composed of representatives of the bourgeois classes, is a counter-revolutionary Government," therefore it behoves the Social-Democratic party to expose its attempts to retard the progress of the Revolution and "to rebuild the entire structure of the State upon a new basis, in accordance with the interest of revolutionary democracy, and to organise its forces, isolating those of the counter-revolution in the same process. By so doing, we are paving the way to a transference of power into the hands of the revolutionary democracy at the propitious moment."

Lenin himself brought out these ideas with perfect clearness. We must give Lenin his due. From the very first he made no secret of his chief aim—to kindle a revolution not only in Russia but throughout the world. All the rest was for him mere by-play. The Russian people, in whose name he spoke, were but a tool in the hand of this fanatic of the Revolution, and Russia herself but a vast area for Socialistic experiments. He often admitted as much with absolute frankness, never concealing his contempt for moral law, for which he substituted the laws of economic materialism. His numerous articles and pamphlets are full of open, deliberate contempt for right and justice. As far back as 1906, Lenin had published a pamphlet, "The Victory of the Cadets, and the Problems of the Labour Party," in which he expounded the following views: "The scientific meaning of a dictatorship implies nothing else than the idea of a power, unlimited, absolutely unfettered by any laws or regulations and based directly upon violence." The dictatorship of a revolutionary people closely resembles this definition. "The mass of the population, formless, accidentally assembled at a given place, itself takes action, judges and condemns, assumes full power, creates new revolutionary rights."

"Is it well for the people to employ such illegal, disorderly, unsystematic methods of struggle as the seizure of power and acts of violence against the people's oppressors? Yes, it is very well, for it is the highest expression of a people's struggle for liberty." This is but a theoretical scheme and it is doubtful whether, in drawing it up, Lenin ever dreamed what ample opportunity would be granted him by history for making the experiment of his arm-chair Socialistic theory on the living organism of the Russian State. The scheme indeed was akin to that of the Socialists of other sects, not only of the Marxists, whose doctrines are based on the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but even of the Social-Revolutionaries. It was not without significance that at the very beginning of the Revolution, Chernoff, the most prominent leader of the Social-Revolutionary party, when reproached by the Right because the Social-Revolutionaries incited the peasants to violence against the landowners and to the arbitrary seizure of the land, replied: "That is quite as it should be, it is the revolutionary creation of right." These were the very words of Lenin. On April 17, at a Social-Democratic Conference, on the day following his triumphal entry into Petrograd, Lenin appeared with the mien of a prophet carrying the tables of the Marxist Law. He read out a series of theses, which according to him were to constitute the basis of party work in revolutionary Russia. The programme seemed at the time so impossible as to be harmless. But later, when the power fell into the hands of this cold and evil visionary, he embodied these theses in Government decrees. Transferred from newspaper columns to State documents and thence into real life, these sentences acquired a new and terrible significance.

Lenin, first of all, proclaimed that the decayed and

discordant Social-Democratic party must be transformed into a new and vigorous Communistic party (this he accomplished after the *coup d'état*); that a new revolutionary International was to be created in opposition to the International of the Socialistic Chauvinists (this was also accomplished with the aid of a liberal expenditure of the Russian people's money). Lenin further said: "Our immediate task lies not in the establishment of Socialism, but in establishing Soviet control over public production and distribution"!

And in order to accomplish this, it was necessary to "effect an immediate amalgamation of all the banks in the country into one all-national bank, controlled by the Soviet." (That was also accomplished.)

All landed property belonging to the landowners was to be confiscated. All land was to be nationalised and placed at the disposal of local Soviets composed of the poorest peasants. (The confiscation was begun before the Bolsheviks' day. They only added the final touches. But the attempt to nationalise proved abortive because no one obeyed the local Soviets.) The established form of Government was not to be a parliamentary republic, but a republic of Soviets "all over the country from top to bottom." This was to be the Commune-State, whose archetype had been given in the Paris Commune. This organisation was, in fact, established. Under this new order, all police, army, and officials were to be abolished. The abolition of officials must, however, be understood with qualifications, because the next point announced that officials would be elected and would be liable to removal, their salary not exceeding that of an average workman.

Naturally, Lenin in declaring these party aims demanded that no support should be granted to the Provisional Government. "We must explain and make

clear," he said, "the absolute falsity of all its promises, especially of those concerning the refusal of annexations." Moreover, as the war "under the new Government of Lvoff & Co. still remained a predatory imperialistic war owing to the capitalistic character of the Government," there could be no concessions to revolutionary defencism. "The enlightened proletariat can give its sanction to a revolutionary war which would really justify a revolutionary defencism only under the following conditions: (*a*) the transfer of power to the proletariat and the poorest peasants; (*b*) the abandonment of annexations not merely in words but deeds; (*c*) a complete and real breach with all capitalistic interests." (All these points appeared at the time in No. 28 of Lenin's paper, *The Social Democrat.*) Lenin laid his views before a conference called for the purpose of uniting the Social-Democratic party, which had been broken up into several sections chiefly as a result of the action of the Bolsheviks. Lenin met with no success at the Conference. He was laughed at. Some speakers openly condemned his tactics as leading to civil war. His proposals were defeated by 115 votes to 20. But in the end he proved right in his mocking denial of the possibility of uniting all tendencies. As before, so also after the Conference, in spite of the frantic efforts of all the intellectual groups forming the Right wing, the Bolsheviks continued to rule both in the Central Committee and in other influential party organisations. Moreover, their appeals moved the masses, and when the masses moved the rest of the Socialists had perforce to follow, themselves half-intoxicated by the excitement of agitation, and never clearly realising what the Bolshevist danger would bring to Russia.

The Bolsheviks were entirely at home in that influential body the Petrograd Soviet. Within its

precincts they were often hotly opposed in argument, but they were treated as true comrades. The Soviet—otherwise known as the Revolutionary Democracy—aimed at "deepening the Revolution," and for that kind of work the Bolsheviks might obviously be very useful.

Almost simultaneously with Lenin's entry into Petrograd, a Social-Democratic Conference at Moscow accepted all the Bolshevist watchwords. "The task of the working class," it declared, "consists in securing and spreading conditions which will guarantee the maximum development of the Revolution. Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies must be created all over the country. . . . Intense revolutionary work must be carried out in the army. . . . The working class will continue to struggle against the present Government's attitude towards the war, as it struggled against that of the old régime, for the war is being conducted in opposition to the interests of the people and exclusively to satisfy the predatory instincts of the governing classes. . . . The publication of the secret treaties shall be demanded and an end must be put to the war. An endeavour must be made to ensure that the democratic Russian Revolution shall immediately be continued in the West, so that the Western peoples, casting off the yoke of the guilty instigators of the present fratricidal slaughter, may without fear of external invasion devote their whole strength to the struggle for freedom from all exploitation. The Russian proletariat must immediately come into touch with the proletariat of all belligerent and neutral countries for the purpose of calling an international conference, which shall serve as a step towards the regeneration of the proletariat International." (Carried at the Moscow Social-Democratic Conference, April 16–17, 1917.)

Lenin's programme together with this Moscow resolution form the basis of all Bolshevist activities in Russia. But some points (*e.g.* imperialistic war can be ended only by agreement between the international proletariat; the deepening of the Revolution, etc.) found a place in the working programme of nearly all the Socialist parties.

Take the following instances. The Menshevist *Labour Gazette* (*Rabochaya Gazeta*), the mouthpiece of Tsereteli and Chheidze, wrote: "Russian soldiers must take the initiative. Upon all sections of the front, they must in some way or another enter into communication with their brothers the enemy on the other side of the wire entanglements, and mark the 1st of May as the day of the first revolutionary armistice" (April 25). Another number of the same paper announced: "The Germans are waiting for communications concerning the frontal congress and have even sent out delegates. Communication has been received by aeroplane to the effect that the German people are demanding peace."

The same paper gives the following thrilling description: "Troop trains moving along the front are decorated with red flags bearing the inscriptions: 'Down with the policy of grab,' 'Long live the brotherhood of the peoples.' This call unites the army more and more."

It should be noted that at the Moscow Conference, where Lenin's influence was not as yet directly felt, several points were included in the resolution which were absent from his programme—probably at the instance of the Mensheviks. Such are the points concerning the creation of Zemstvo and municipal self-government based upon universal suffrage, absolute liberty of the press, of meetings, unions and strikes. Probably, even in his earlier dreams of power, Lenin realised that his scheme for the compulsory socialisation

of life was incompatible with the principles of political freedom, and cautiously avoided these questions in all his speeches and articles.

Lenin established his headquarters in the palace of the ballet-dancer Kchesinska, a house which popular rumour had long since enveloped in mysterious legends of dark German intrigue. It now became the open centre of furious propaganda against the Russian State. Here the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic party sat enthroned. Here were gathered all the threads of an energetic and astute propaganda which soon stretched its snares over the whole front, over working-class districts, and out to the principal points of naval defence. Cronstadt and Helsingfors soon became Bolshevist military bases. There they practised with impunity that system of exterminating Russian officers which later became one of the features of the Soviet Government of the country. Naval officers were thrown into prison and murdered by the dozen. The sailor mob scoffed at them, and soon the name of "Cronstadt sailor" became for many a synonym of cruelty and crime, though Chernoff and other representatives of the Revolutionary Democracy thought fit to call them "the pride and glory of the Russian Revolution."

The Bolshevist organ *Pravda* was published in enormous quantities and distributed gratis at the front. After Lenin's arrival *via* Germany the Bolsheviks found themselves in funds and spent them freely. Soldiers and sailors, sent to the villages for party propaganda, boasted to the peasants of the hundred-rouble notes which filled their pockets. And long before the Ganetzky-Furstenberg affair came to light, popular rumour decided that the Bolsheviks were working with German money, especially as their strenuous efforts to destroy the army were so openly favourable to Germany. At the street

meetings, which hummed and buzzed all over Petrograd during the whole summer in 1917, Leninist catchwords were often repeated by people speaking very bad Russian. Indeed, the German shadow which covered Russia in 1918 was already clearly visible behind Bolshevist internationalism. The danger of Bolshevism was even then plainly apparent.

But the Revolutionary Democracy was leniently disposed towards its comrades, endeavoured to smooth over all divergencies, and concealed under a flaunting of red banners and a tumult of Socialistic phraseology the sinister glint of civil war that leered out in the Bolshevist propaganda. An extremely characteristic resolution was carried by the Executive Committee of the Soldiers' Deputies:

> Having discussed the communication of our comrades concerning the spreading of a propaganda of disorganisation under cover of revolutionary and often even of Social-Democratic flags, particularly the propaganda of the so-called Leninists, and considering such propaganda no less pernicious than any other counter-revolutionary propaganda; at the same time considering it impossible to adopt any repressive measures against propaganda, while it remains mere propaganda, the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies recognises the utmost urgency of adopting a series of measures to counteract this propaganda with our own propaganda and agitation. (April 28.)

However strange it may sound, some of the first to raise their voices against Lenin and all the false pacifists who stupefied the soldiers' brains were the discharged invalid soldiers. Their Union, organised at the very beginning of the Revolution, deserves special study. These men, who had sacrificed their youth and health to their country, who had often passed through the degrading hardships of imprisonment, now saw to their

horror that all their heroism, all their sacrifices were being rendered useless by revolutionary catchwords, and that obscure and irresponsible talkers were thrusting Russia under Germany's heel. There was something infinitely touching and tragic in the sight of those cripples, without arms or legs, blinded and disfigured by war, straining every nerve to prove that the war must be carried on, that no liberty was possible without victory. Members of the Disabled Men's Union organised meetings, visited barracks, appealed to the Government and made street demonstrations. On April 29 an enormous crowd of invalids gathered in the Kazan Square and marched towards the Taurida Palace. The placards they carried bore the inscriptions: "Lenin & Co. back to Germany," "The Motherland is in danger," "Our wounds call for victory," and so on. As they approached the palace they were met by members of the Executive Committee of the Soviet.

"We have come here to expose Lenin's tactics and your attitude towards him," declared one of the invalids. Skobeleff, Tsereteli, and other Soviet orators said in reply that although they did not entirely agree with Lenin, they did not deem it possible to oppose him by other than intellectual methods.

Apparently the disabled men were not particularly satisfied by the explanations received from the Soviet orators. The future Minister, M. Skobeleff, did use the rather risky phrase that "we must beat Germany," but no one supported him, while Gvozdeff, a prominent Labour leader, declared: "We consider the war should be ended by an agreement with the German proletariat."

After prolonged discussions out in the square the invalids drafted a lengthy resolution, ending thus:

> We greet our Allies, and ask them to believe that in unity

with them the Russian army and people will bring the war to a victorious end for the consolidation of our newly acquired liberties and the self-determination of all oppressed peoples.

Meanwhile around them stood the young, strong, and healthy soldiers of the Petrograd garrison who had never yet been in the trenches, and smirked contemptuously. . . .

Unfortunately not only the Soviet but the Government itself did not for a long time realise the danger of Bolshevism. Even the Cadet leader, Milyukoff, the avowed antagonist of the entire Soviet policy, speaking at a meeting a few days before his definite rupture with them on the 29th of April, said: "Lenin is a harmful fanatic, but you cannot demand that we should oppose him with the methods of the old régime." It was not till later that Milyukoff began to insist on the arrest of Lenin and the Leninists. But having rejected the Tsarist methods of diverting the currents that threatened to undermine the State, the new Government had failed to discover any other adequate means of dealing with them. Those were right who ironically called Prince Lvoff's Government a Tolstoyan Government of non-resistance to evil. Both in Soviet and Government circles there existed a childlike certitude that evil should be combated by force of conviction, that mere persuasion, without prohibition and compulsory measures, would be sufficient to prevent anarchy from spreading at the front and in the rear. Meanwhile, not only in intellectual circles, but among the crowd in the streets, Bolshevist speeches at first excited indignation and a desire that some power, strong and just, would put a stop to such iniquity.

When the Bolsheviks' summons to end the war with Germany and begin the war against the Provisional Government was first proclaimed from the balcony of

Kchesinska's house, it was received by the crowd with the same disapproval as were Lenin's speeches at the Conference. On the very first evening (April 25) the indignant audience arrested about twenty people at the Troitsky Square and conveyed them to the militia. This was absolutely useless, for those in authority found nothing criminal in such speeches. But the same kind of speeches were uttered not only in the neighbourhood of Kchesinska's house, they could be heard all over the city, in the army, throughout the length and breadth of the land. And they were often uttered by strange-looking men, speaking broken Russian. While a certain discipline still remained, it is curious to note how the army reacted against such propaganda. Towards the end of May (according to a Press Agency telegram) Ensign Kruser, arriving at the Rumanian front from Cronstadt, preached fraternisation and distrust of the Government, and "even falsely asserted that the Odessa Congress of Frontal Delegates demanded annexations and indemnities." He was arrested and sent off to Jassy, because the workmen at Skudiany had promised to "stain their hands in blood" if he again dared to make an appearance. The Soviet of Soldiers' and Officers' Deputies at Jassy denounced his activities as harmful, but, "possessing no means of counteracting them," despatched him to Odessa and decided "to appeal to the press in order to devise some means of opposing such pernicious agitation." This was but one of countless cases. Yet how could effective means of counter-action be found, when every attempt to restrict the irresponsible agitation at the front met with indignant resistance from the Soviet, and when Generals who dared to point out the danger of such propaganda were branded in the *Izvestia* and other organs of the Revolutionary Democracy as counter-revolutionaries? At the same

time, the Germans and Austrians lent vigorous aid to this extreme Socialistic propaganda. They propagated Bolshevist ideas in proclamations sown broadcast along the front, and in newspapers printed in Germany and Vienna in Russian. These papers were distributed not only among the prisoners, but among the soldiers in the trenches. For instance, the Berlin *Russian Messenger*, in its issue of April 27, wrote :

> Aided by the English, a clique of deputies to the Duma have seized the power and formed a Provisional Government. The new Cadet party is preventing the workmen from taking the power into their own hands, and, after ridding Russia of English aggression and the supremacy of English capital, proclaiming a social republic and making peace.

The Central Powers were therefore already engaged in active propaganda, incriminating the Provisional Government and advertising Lenin and his catchwords. This strange coincidence between the ideas of the extreme Russian Socialists and those of the official propagandists of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany has more than once been commented upon by the Russian Press, and not only in the bourgeois papers.

Plekhanoff's small but lively and patriotic paper, *Unity* (*Edinstvo*), carried on a passionate campaign of accusation. One of the oldest Russian revolutionary *émigrés*, Leo Deutch, published in this paper information concerning Trotsky's propaganda in America. Deutch justly called him " a hater of Russia." Madame Kollontai's activities in America were contemporary with those of Trotsky. " Her tirades against us (*i.e.* against Defencist-Socialists) were," said Deutch, " so revolting that Russian workmen in several towns expressed, both by word of mouth and in the press, the suspicion that perhaps she had been expressly sent by

German Socialists for the purpose of whitewashing German Social-Democrats, by calumny directed against those who advocated the defence of the ravaged countries."

But all these warnings and facts were ignored by the Revolutionary Democracy, and indeed rather tended to enhance their friendliness towards the Bolsheviks, whom they always exalted as their comrades-in-ideas. Soviet leaders and journalists defended Lenin and his satellites at meetings and in the Socialist Press, and all attempts to disclose the poisonous substance of Bolshevism were branded as bourgeois calumny.

Lenin himself felt no scruples in attacking the Socialist Centre, and did so with great polemic astuteness.

In May he issued a pamphlet entitled "Political Parties in Russia and the Task of the Proletariat," in which, in the form of questions and answers, he gave character-sketches of both the bourgeois and Socialistic parties. His estimate of the latter was ironical. To a question as to the attitude of the Social-Democrats and the Social-Revolutionaries towards Socialism he gave the following answer: "They stand for Socialism, but to think of it now and to take immediate practical steps towards its realisation they have not the courage, for they think that would be premature." The Bolsheviks, on the contrary, are all for trying to bring about Socialism forthwith, beginning by the seizure of all land and the nationalisation of the banks. Lenin gives a sarcastic definition of the non-Bolshevist Socialists' attitude towards the seizure of power. "If the Soviets alone seize power we shall be threatened with anarchy. For the time being, leave power to the capitalists, and the Contact-Commission to the Soviet." The Contact-Commission served as a link between the Revolutionary Democracy and the Government. Lenin invariably

insisted that no contact was necessary, because the Government should not be supported; "the people should be prepared for the sole and absolute power of the Soviets," and "all propaganda, agitation, and organisation should be directed towards the delegation of all power to the Soviets in the immediate future."

The Cadets, Lenin declared, though enemies, were at any rate straightforward. But those whom he called Defencist-Socialists, he urged, while agreeing with the Bolsheviks in words, drew back timidly before the necessity of at last suiting the action to the word. And he exposed the ambiguity of their attitude with the ruthless familiarity of an old fellow-worker. He accorded the same treatment to the Social-Revolutionaries and to the non-Bolshevist Social-Democrats, although these latter still regarded themselves as being members of one undivided party, to which the Bolsheviks also belonged.

Lenin's description of the attitude adopted by the Social-Revolutionaries and the Social-Democrats towards the war is as follows: "We are generally opposed to imperialistic war, but are ready to let ourselves be duped, and will call the support we offer to the imperialistic war conducted by the Guchkoff-Milyukoff & Co. Government by the name of revolutionary defencism." And as to fraternisation, their attitude was: "Yes, it is useful. But we are not all of us convinced that such fraternisation ought to be encouraged at once in all belligerent countries." He himself was certainly decidedly against the war and for fraternisation. "It is useful and absolutely necessary. It is urgently necessary to encourage attempts at fraternisation between soldiers of both belligerent sides in all belligerent countries."

Only on the question of army organisation, more

particularly of that of the election of officers, was he ready to grant that his Socialist comrades possessed a definite view. Their answer was brief. "Elections must take place." The Bolshevist answer was more lengthy. "Not only must officers be elected, but every step of an officer or general must be controlled by soldiers specially elected for the purpose." To the question: "Is the arbitrary dismissal of superiors useful?" Lenin made the Social-Democrats and Social-Revolutionaries answer: "Yes, it is useful; but it remains uncertain whether the dismissal must take place before referring to the Contact-Commission or *vice versa*." The Bolsheviks asserted: "It is useful and necessary in every way. Soldiers obey and respect only elected superiors."

Thus point by point Lenin not only expounded the views of his party, but also his attitude towards that section of the Revolutionary Democracy which, at that time, still played the leading part. His subsequent behaviour was but the logical outcome of all his actions and declarations.

It was futile after the November *coup d'état* for the defeated Socialist centre to raise the cry that the Bolsheviks were traitors. They acted openly right through, and it was easy enough to understand what deeds would be the tragic outcome of the interminable torrent of speeches so often uttered in unison by both the Right and the Left Socialist wings. Upon one point only in the above-quoted pamphlet did Lenin's words differ from his subsequent action. "Must the Constituent Assembly be convoked?" he asked. According to him, the Cadets did not desire to fix a date. The Social-Democrats and the Social-Revolutionaries wished it to be called as soon as possible, but were unable to insist upon the date being fixed. The Bolsheviks were the only ones to desire a speedy convocation. "There is, however," said

Lenin, " only one guarantee of the success of the Constituent Assembly: the increase in numbers and in strength of the Soviets, the organisation and arming of the working masses."

Curiously enough, although the pamphlet was published in May, after the formation of the Coalition Cabinet with a Socialist majority, Lenin did not modify his acrid criticism of his " comrades-in-ideas." On the contrary, he added a note declaring that the pamphlet was by no means out-of-date, " because the Contact-Commission has not disappeared, but has only passed into the adjacent room, that of Messrs. the Ministers. That Chernoff and Tsereteli have passed into another room does not signify that their policy or that of their party has changed."

He was displeased with their policy of words without deeds, but " in view of the undoubted honesty of the great mass of revolutionary defencists," he appealed to his comrades to explain to them patiently and persistently " the indissoluble links uniting capital and imperialistic war, to prove that it was only by overthrowing capital that they could without violence achieve a truly democratic peace."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FIRST GOVERNMENT CRISIS

Shulgin and Tsereteli—Whence is the danger?—Crisis because of the word "victory"—Resignation of Milyukoff and Guchkoff—The Coalition Ministry—The Declaration of the new Government and the Zimmerwald formulæ—The Socialist Ministers—Alexieff's speech—His retirement of the post of Generalissimo.

In the spring of 1917 the Revolutionary Democracy was blind both to the danger of Bolshevism and to the military peril. Of this we have clear evidence in the speech delivered on May 10 by the Soviet leader, Tsereteli, a Menshevik, at the extraordinary meeting of the four State Dumas, which reviewed the events of the first two months of the Revolution. This first public meeting, the first public skirmish between the two principal political groups—the Socialists and the *bourgeoisie*—coincided with the first Ministerial crisis.

Warning voices sounded from the Right. They emphasised the German peril in view of the growing disruption of the army, pointed to the spread of anarchy throughout the country, the land riots fraught with the menace of starvation, and the ambiguous position of the Government.

The Kiev Deputy, Shulgin, a courageous and able patriot, said in his pointed way: "The Tsar's Government is shut up in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, while the Provisional Government is under domiciliary

arrest. A keeper is appointed to guard it with the instruction, ' Keep a sharp look out ; they are bourgeois, they must be closely watched.' " Shulgin spoke of the criminal incitement of soldiers against the officers, of the open street propaganda against the Allies, particularly against England, adding that all this pacifist propaganda among the ignorant masses emanated from Lenin and " his pack."

Tsereteli's response was imbued with the spirit of the Zimmerwald Conference and its denial of a class-truce during war-time. " The so-called defence of the Fatherland in the present war is nothing but a fraud, aiming at subjugating the people to the service of Imperialism," declared the manifesto of the second Zimmerwald Conference. This, too, was the standpoint from which Tsereteli estimated the war and Russia's relations with her Allies. " Everything for the war," said Shulgin in his speech. The spokesman of the Soviet objected that this was " the motto of the autocracy, to whom war was both an aim and a means." From the Benches of Deputies he was reminded that in England and France that was the motto of the whole nation. But Tsereteli did not believe that unity between the people and the Government could exist anywhere, even in free countries. " The French and English nations are one thing, and the Imperialistic gang another, and you will soon see this proved there as triumphantly as in Russia. We are profoundly convinced that the English working classes will direct the policy of their Ministers in conformity with their class interests." Tsereteli did not wish " to re-establish the formula of the destruction of German imperialism," because " the destruction of a foreign country's imperialism by armed force is the surest way of implanting imperialism and barbarism in one's own country." The idea of vanquish-

ing the Germans was as abhorrent to him as it was to the Bolsheviks. Like them, he did not so much desire to fight as to "apply the utmost endeavours to provoke a certain corresponding (revolutionary) movement in other countries." Yet, at the same time, he expressed the assurance that "so long as our country was threatened by the invasion of imperialistic armies, the Russian Democracy would stand firm for the defence of its liberty, and no wavering would be possible in the ranks of the army." Not only the Stavka (Headquarters), but all the Generals, and even the Army Committees expressed alarm at the growing disintegration of the army. But Tsereteli simply did not believe these rumours,[1] just as he declined to believe that Lenin was leading Russia to civil war. "I do not agree with Lenin and his propaganda," said Prince Tsereteli, "but Deputy Shulgin's words are a calumny against Lenin. Lenin has never preached anything preventing the onward march of the Revolution. Lenin is conducting a propaganda of ideas and principles which is nourished by such demonstrations as that of Shulgin and the so-called moderate propertied elements. Thus the possibility of an agreement with the *bourgeoisie* is eliminated. According to Lenin's standpoint, when the *bourgeoisie* becomes incapable of dealing with problems concerning the entire State, it must be set aside and the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies assume full power. If Shulgin's ideas were shared by all the *bourgeoisie*, then I must say that the only hope for Russia's salvation lies in the

[1] Tsereteli's thoughtless "I do not believe it" was cruelly avenged by merciless fate. After the Bolshevist *coup d'état* he was obliged to escape to Georgia. Only after witnessing the sufferings of his own Georgian people did he realise the meaning of Bolshevism. On June 15, 1918, he printed a letter in the *Izvestia* of Tiflis, describing how the demoralised army plundered the country, sold arms and munitions to the enemy, disarmed the national troops, and how Bolsheviks scattered ruin and death wherever they went. Then only Tsereteli and his Social-Democratic comrades understood—and preferred the friendship of German Generals, surrendering Georgia to the German yoke.

dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants. Such ideas as Shulgin's constitute the only real menace of civil war."

Subsequent events showed the lamentable short-sightedness of Tsereteli. It was not the *bourgeoisie* but Lenin and his satellites who unchained the demons of civil war in Russia. But the Revolutionary Democracy, intoxicated with the new wine of liberty, looked only to the Right for its enemies, expected blows to come only from that quarter, and hastened to put into practice all its cherished watchwords, all the resolutions adopted at once obscure and unpopular but very long-winded Socialistic meetings and congresses.

The Ministerial crisis which took place in May was a manifestation of that distrust of the " Right " parties which was so skilfully and persistently fanned into flame by the Bolsheviks. This time the word " victory," used by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, P. Milyukoff, in a Note addressed to the Allied countries, served as a motive for the crisis. From the very beginning of the Revolution this word was regarded in Soviet circles as counter-revolutionary. On March 30, for instance, the *Izvestia* published an article advising the soldiers taking part in manifestations to replace on their banners the motto " War until Victory " by that of " War for Liberty."

A demonstration was organised against Milyukoff on account of his Note declaring that " the entire Russian people aspired to continue the war until final victory." The Bolsheviks started their agitation in the barracks. On May 3 a section of the Finland Regiment marched up to the Marie Palace, where the Government sat, carrying placards with the inscriptions: " Down with annexations," " Down with the Government," " Down with Milyukoff and Guchkoff." They were joined by other military units, but a strong

counter-demonstration was at once organised in support of Milyukoff and the Government. Hot disputes for and against the Government raged at street meetings. Soviet orators came to the palace and urged the soldiers to disperse. General Korniloff, Commander of the Petrograd Military District, also appeared in the square. "You represent an armed people," he said. "Therein lies your strength. But you are also weak, because you are not as well-disciplined as good troops should be. Then try to be not merely an armed crowd, but a real, well-disciplined army."

The demonstrators dispersed. But the instigators of the demonstration won the day. A split was created in the Provisional Government. The Executive Committee of the Soviet, which from the first had looked suspiciously on the firm patriotism of Guchkoff and Milyukoff, secured their resignation.

The *Izvestia* did not conceal its joy when the Minister of War, Guchkoff, resigned on the 15th of May and Milyukoff on the 16th.

This important Government change was welcomed with equal rejoicing by the Berlin Press.

In point of fact it was but the first step towards the realisation of the Bolshevist demand—full power to the Soviets. The Bolshevist Central Committee of the Social-Democratic party exerted a very resolute pressure upon its less energetic comrades in order to achieve this end. The *Pravda* published a lengthy appeal from the Social-Democrats to the soldiers of all belligerent countries calling upon them to put an immediate end to the "imperialistic robbers' war." "The Russian Provisional Government," wrote the *Pravda*, "published on the 3rd of May a Note confirming the old predatory treaties, and expresses its readiness to continue the war until complete victory is attained, thereby raising

indignation even among those who have hitherto trusted and supported it." The *Pravda* therefore demands the transfer of power to the revolutionary Soviets by means of a workmen's revolution. The appeal ends with a new war-cry : " Peace to the huts, War to the palaces ! Hurrah for Socialism ! "

Simultaneously with this open summons to civil war the Bolsheviks wrote :

> Party agitators and orators must refute the dastardly lies of the capitalists and capitalist papers, accusing us of being the instigators of civil war. . . . Party agitators must again and again protest against the hideous calumnies spread by capitalists, that our party is advocating a separate peace with Germany. We consider William II. just such another crowned robber deserving of execution as Nicholas II., and the German Guchkoffs and German capitalists as being robbers, grabbers, and imperialists as much as Russian, English and all other capitalists. We are opposed to negotiations with capitalists. We stand for negotiations and fraternisation between the revolutionary workmen and soldiers of all countries. We are firmly persuaded that the Guchkoff-Milyukoff Government are trying to render the situation more acute because they know that the workmen's revolution is beginning in Germany, and " this revolution will strike a blow at the capitalists of all countries."

All the subsequent work of the Bolsheviks demonstrated the hypocrisy of these protests. Both separate peace and civil war were but the logical consequences of their agitation. But in the spring of 1917 the masses of soldiers and workmen, simple-minded, ignorant, bewildered by unintelligible foreign words, intoxicated by demagogic promises, firmly believed that it sufficed but to put all the " downs " into practice for the war to end as if by magic, and every workman to become a gentleman. Committee meetings and conferences, all packed with soldiers, adopted without demur the most extreme resolutions,

particularly those which promised a speedy peace. Resolutions rose everywhere, like bubbles on the water's surface. Workmen, schoolboys, servant-maids, doctors, soldiers' wives, railway-guards, sextons—all hastened to embody their particular needs and new-born political ideas in lengthy and often quite amusing resolutions. But the Soviets lent an attentive ear to all these chance decisions of chance meetings.

After the resignation of Milyukoff and Guchkoff the Provisional Government found themselves definitely in the power of the Soviet, which could no longer maintain the attitude of an irresponsible critic. The formation of a Coalition Government with the participation of Socialists became inevitable. The Bolsheviks, led by Trotsky, who by that time had returned from abroad, protested very sharply against the coalition headed by the bourgeois Prince Lvoff, and even then urged the Soviet to take the power into its own hands. But the Soviet would not go so far and only introduced five of its members into the Government—Chernoff, Peshekhonoff, Skobeleff, Tsereteli, and Pereverzeff. The new Cabinet was composed of six Socialists (including Kerensky), four Cadets, and four non-party members.[1]

Since, however, one of the Cadets, Nekrasoff, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tereshchenko, frequently voted with the Socialists, all the power was practically concentrated in the Socialists' hands, in so far at least as the Provisional Government represented a power.

[1] The names of the members of the new Cabinet were: (1) Premier and Minister of the Interior, Prince Lvoff; (2) Minister of Labour, Skobeleff (S.D.); (3) Minister of Justice, Pereverzeff (S.R.); (4) Agriculture, Chernoff (S.R.); (5) Supplies, Peshekhonoff (Pop.-Soc.); (6) War and Marine, Kerensky (S.R.); (7) Social Assistance, Prince Shakhovskoy (Cadet); (8) Finance, Shingareff (Cadet); (9) Post and Telegraph, Tsereteli (S.D.); (10) Commerce and Industry, Konovaloff (Progressist); (11) Foreign Affairs, Tereshchenko (non-party); (12) Railways and Communications, Nekrasoff (Cadet); (13) State-Controller, Godneff (Oct.); (14) Education, Manuiloff (Cadet); (14) Synod Lvoff (Oct.).

What the aims of these new statesmen were, and what was their conception of their duties towards the destiny of the Russian people, may be gathered from the declarations of the Executive Committee and the Provisional Government respectively.

On entering the Provisional Government the representatives of the Soviet, while associating themselves with the general and insistent aspirations for the consolidation of liberty, have imposed on themselves the following task: to pursue an active foreign policy openly aiming at a speedy conclusion of peace based upon the self-determination of peoples, without annexations and indemnities; and more particularly the preparation of negotiations with the Allies for a revision of the agreement based upon the declaration of the Provisional Government of May 9 (April 27).

Thus spoke the Executive Committee.

The declaration of the Coalition Government, dated May 19, repeated the same words with regard to a speedy conclusion of peace (without annexations and contributions, based upon the self-determination of the peoples). This was the first occasion on which an official document of the Russian Government quoted a part of the formula which formed the basis of the invitation to the third Zimmerwald Conference. This invitation had been sent out by the Swiss Socialist, Robert Grimm, to all parties and organisations that accepted the programme of "a fight against the party truce; the renewal of class war; a demand for an immediate armistice, and conclusion of peace without annexation and indemnities based upon the free self-determination of the nations." After the Brest peace the tragic irony of this formula appeared in all its nakedness. But every discerning mind had perceived it long before, and a large section of the Press and such politicians as Milyukoff, Kropotkin, Plekhanoff, Potresoff,

and Korolenko strained every nerve to disclose the madness and criminality of such watchwords in Russia, where the enemy occupied vast stretches of territory inhabited by small nations whose right to self-determination would certainly not be granted by victorious German troops. It was a hopeless struggle. No amount of logical argument could overcome the academic socialistic prejudices which held far more powerful sway over the minds of the Revolutionary Democracy than all the realities of Russia's internal, external, and, in particular, of her military situation.

The Revolutionary Democracy sank ever deeper into the mire of Bolshevist formulæ which, disguised or undisguised, pervaded the Soviet declarations. The second point of the declaration of the Executive Committee that explained the reason for the Socialists joining the Government demanded "the democratisation of the army, the organisation and strengthening of the fighting forces, and of their capacity for defensive and offensive operations in order to avert a possible defeat of Russia and her Allies, an eventuality not only fraught with the greatest calamities for all nations but one which would render impossible the conclusion of universal peace based upon the above-mentioned principles."

Admitting in word that the defeat of Russia and the Allies would spell calamity to all mankind, the Soviet politicians with a kind of frenzied fury went on destroying the spirit and body of the army. Democratisation and the elective principle, thoughtless or provocative committees and meetings and talk of a speedy peace, loosened organisation and discipline in the army, and darkened the soul of the weary Russian soldier.

In their first reports to the Soviet (May 26) the Socialist Ministers stated their method for carrying out

the Soviet's principles of home and foreign policy. Tsereteli announced that, despite the predictions of their antagonists, nothing alarming had occurred in foreign politics; they had been neither obliged "to capitulate before the Allies, nor to seek the way of a separate peace." (This was said a week after the Socialists had entered the Government.) He described the visit of the Socialist Ministers to the British Ambassador, whom they had asked whether he did not find the time ripe for a revision of the treaties. They had told the Ambassador that they "acted not only through diplomatic channels, but tried to get into touch with all the democracies of the world," which would, according to Tsereteli, follow revolutionary Russia. As Sir George Buchanan made no response, Tsereteli was of opinion that their first step in foreign policy might be considered a success.

It is hard to refrain from a bitter smile on reading the report of this naïve conversation now, when it has become so clearly apparent how these infants in statesmanship, playing at international politics, were only paving the way for the Bolshevist state-criminals who were stealthily watching for their turn. At the same meeting of the Soviet, after Tsereteli's ingenuous report on his diplomatic achievements, the new Minister of Labour, the Social-Democrat M. Skobeleff, made a still more naïve declaration: "I had meant to go to the Zimmerwald Conference," he said, "and now I am a Minister."

According to him, before his time the affairs of State were conducted by ignoramuses, and Russia was being ruined. Everything must be altered, all branches of social life interfered with. The position of the labouring masses must first of all be ameliorated, and to this end all the revenues of the banks and commercial

enterprises should be taken over. Propertied classes should be taxed up to 100 per cent. "If capital desires to hold to the bourgeois system of economics, let it work without interest." Shareholders, bankers, and factory-owners would call upon the Government, lay down their registers and keys, and say, "Take over our business and do as you will." "But we know," Skobeleff answered, "when and what to take. We must force these gentlemen to submit to the state and establish for them a labour conscription. It was their duty, that is to say, to remain in their positions at the command of the Government." Such was the scheme of the Minister of Labour for saving Russia from ruin. In the same breath he defended the workmen accused of a "democratisation of profiteering," *i.e.* of presenting economic demands which destroyed all production. His defence was extremely biassed. In reality the workmen's excessive demands had already, in the spring of 1917, undermined Russian industry. The Anarchist Bleichman praised the speech of the Minister of Labour, declaring that it was in accordance with Lenin's principles. But both the Anarchists and Trotsky thought that the Socialists had played long enough at supporting a coalition, and that the Soviet should now be given full power. In that respect they were more logical than the Socialist Ministers, who did not wish themselves or the Soviet to be wholly responsible; and while inciting the masses to a struggle against the capitalists and landowners, considered that the *bourgeoisie* must share their responsibility.

In order to dispel all doubts as to the adherence of the new Socialist Ministers to the Zimmerwald programme, the Soviet department for Foreign Relations, then still directed by Skobeleff, sent out a Note to the nations of the world. It appeared as a sort of response

to an article by Huysmans published in the Swedish *Social Demokraten*, in which he compared the Russian Socialist Ministers with their French and English colleagues. The "Russian Socialist Ministers," this Note declared didactically, "are delegated to the Government for the purpose of obtaining a peace by an agreement between the nations and not of prosecuting an imperialistic war in the name of the liberation of the nations at the point of the bayonet. Russian Ministers have no intention whatsoever of supporting the party truce which had been created by the military menace. . . . The basis of the Socialists' participation in the Government lay not in the cessation of class war, but, on the contrary, in its further development with the weapons of political power" (*Izvestia*, No. 70).

This conception of the part to be played in the Government by the Socialists obviously struck at the very roots of any idea of a coalition based upon an agreement between the Socialist and bourgeois parties. It created an inner front upon the very heights of authority. The German army occupied the whole of Poland, the north-western region and part of the Baltic provinces. The menace of a further German invasion was perfectly obvious to any one who had eyes to see. At a time when by a three years' war and the criminal mistakes of the Tsarist régime the economic life of Russia had been undermined, the new power of the revolutionary democracy which succeeded it saw its prime duty, not in the defence of the State, nor in the building up of a new order of internal freedom, but in the deepening of class war in fulfilment of the sacred will of Karl Marx. Yet, notwithstanding all this, Skobeleff cries with a fine flourish of trumpets, "Let no one say we shall be a plaything in the Kaiser's hands; no, the Kaiser will be a plaything in ours."

Given this puerile misunderstanding of the terrible burden of the war borne by the Russian people, it is not surprising that the Socialist Ministers, deeming themselves the sole exponents of the people's will, listened angrily and impatiently to the bitter warnings of the military leaders. General Alexeieff, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, spoke very plainly at the first officers' congress (May 10).

"Russia is going to ruin," he said. "She is tottering on the brink of an abyss. A few more thrusts, and with all her weight she will crash into its very depths. The enemy has occupied the eighth part of our territory. He cannot be bribed by the Utopian phrase: 'Peace without annexations or indemnities.' He openly desires both annexations and indemnities. He stretches out his greedy paw to where no enemy soldier has ever been before, he stretches a hand towards wealthy Volhynia, Podolia, the Kiev region, towards the entire right bank of our Dnieper. And what of ourselves? Will the Russian army ever permit it? Shall we not hurl this insolent foe out of our country, and then leave diplomacy to conclude a peace with or without annexations? Let us be frank; the fighting spirit of the Russian army is exhausted. But yesterday stern and powerful, it now faces the enemy in a trance of fatal inaction. A longing for peace and quiet has replaced the old traditional loyalty to the country. Base instincts of self-preservation are re-awakened. Where is the powerful authority at home for which the whole state is yearning? We are told—it will come soon. But we do not see it yet. What has become of our love for the Mother-country? Where is our patriotism? The sublime word of brotherhood is inscribed upon our banner, but it is not written in our hearts. Class antagonism is raging in our midst; whole classes who had honourably fulfilled their duty to their country are placed under suspicion. As a result a deep abyss has yawned between soldiers and officers.

"We each think only of ourselves, of our own interests. Bread is plentiful, yet the Russian army is underfed, while the horses are completely starved.

"New and brighter days have dawned, but where is the

animation, the transport, the enthusiasm of a young nation that has attained to the supreme blessings of humanity? As yet we see it not. . . .

"Russian officers must unite and think how to pour this enthusiasm into our hearts, for there is no victory without enthusiasm, and without victory there is no salvation, there can be no Russia. . . . We are confronted with the colossal task of restoring discipline, of recasting into a united whole that which constitutes the Russian army, that is the officers and privates, of strongly bridging over and ultimately completely filling up the gulf which divides the private from the officer, of once more moulding them into the rock which was the old Russian army. . . .

"The mass of the army has sincerely, honourably, and rapturously accepted the new régime. The details of the new state organisation will be decided by the Constituent Assembly.

"We must all unite upon the one great platform: Russia is in peril, we, as members of a great army, are bound to save her. Let this standard unite you all and give you the strength to work. Let there be ever present to your mental vision traced in fiery letters the words: 'Yes, Russia is perishing.'"

This speech with its clear and precise prophecy of the terrible danger menacing Russia was made at the very time when the Socialist Ministers were promising peace by means of a class war. The Soviet leaders responded to the bitter warnings of the military authorities and honest patriots by a storm of frenzied abuse, which was taken up by the entire Socialistic Press. Three weeks later (June 4), to the unconcealed joy of the Soviet, General Alexeieff was obliged to resign the post of Commander-in-Chief.

By that time Alexander Kerensky was already Minister of War and Marine. His was an exceedingly difficult position. As a Social-Revolutionary his former attitude in regard to the war had been one of great reserve, and before the Revolution he, like Chheidze, spoke in the Duma not so much of defending the State as of bringing the war to an end. After the Revolution

Chheidze stubbornly held to his former views. But Kerensky was changed. Novel experiences drove him to new, healthier political ideas. He essayed to become the link between the Revolutionary Democracy, whose favourite he was, and Government circles. But he was devoid of clear ideas of statesmanship as well as of a just conception of his own powers. By education a lawyer, with the psychology of a civilian and the ingrained mental habits of an internationalist Socialist, Kerensky, intoxicated by the success of his speeches and his ever-increasing popularity, did not hesitate to take upon himself not only the government of the Russian State, but also the administration of the enormous Russian Army at a time when the country was wearing itself out in a military struggle beyond its strength, when all Government activity had to be concentrated on the solution of the most complicated military problems.

How could Kerensky achieve this, fettered as he was by the dogmas of Revolutionary Democracy, which concerned itself chiefly with the democratisation of the army, not with its military efficiency? He proved incapable even of defending the army's highest asset—its Commanders. The resignation of the able, gifted, experienced General Alexeieff was one of the many instances of the blunt, ruthless, and cruel persecution of officers emanating from Soviet circles. At times Kerensky took a bold stand, but the essential point was beyond his comprehension—that an army is incapable of existing, much less of fighting, without discipline and compulsory and punitive measures.

Like many other revolutionaries, he thought that high-sounding phrases and passionate speeches were sufficient to reawaken the old fighting spirit that had been overstrained by a prolonged war and finally shaken

by propaganda. Kerensky rushed from staff to staff and from camp to camp along the whole front, and made speech after fiery speech to the soldiers, while behind his back, in the heart of the Soviet, his own position was being steadily undermined. The temper of the Revolutionary Democracy was so much the reverse of warlike that the Minister of War did not at once obtain permission to utter the word "offensive," while all talk of "victory" was absolutely forbidden. To take one example out of many. A few days after the reorganisation of the Government the Social-Democrat internationalist Sukhanoff published a threatening article in one of the most influential papers of the Left, *Novaia Zhizn*, edited by Maxim Gorky. "The watchword of an offensive that has eclipsed all others since the advent of the new Government has acquired not its ordinary innocent technical meaning but an odious political significance. The entire trend of the new Government's policy gives this watchword a menacing character." Sukhanoff uttered the warning that neither agitation nor the call of the "bourgeois press" would obtain any results "until every measure has been taken for the liquidation of the war, and until the war is purged of all signs of national and allied imperialism."

Now we know how the Bolsheviks have done the purging and its results are seen. Even Gorky's paper was later forced to oppose those with whom as a matter of fact it marched shoulder to shoulder during the first stage of the Revolution. The fruits of this friendship proved bitter to the now Bolshevist Socialists, yet they ought to have known their friends, for the Bolsheviks never concealed either their programme or their political and social aspirations. Representatives of other Socialist groups were well acquainted with the moral worth of

Lenin and the Leninistes. In the chronicles of Russian refugees and in the history of the Social-Democratic party there are many facts proving their contempt for truth, justice, and honesty, their demoralisation verging upon moral insanity. But the Revolutionary Democracy shut its eyes, blindly worshipping a class doctrine which, it believed, obliterated all that was foul and atoned for every crime.

# CHAPTER V

## THE INTERNATIONAL POLICY OF THE SOVIET

Attitude towards President Wilson—Cool reception of Allied Socialists—Friendly relations with Zimmerwaldists—The Robert Grimm Scandal—The Stockholm Conference.

THE Revolutionary Democracy tried to lead the new Russia along the path indicated by the resolutions passed by the international Socialistic minority. This also determined its relations with the Allies and with Germany.

As the Soviet politicians persistently asserted that the war must be decided, not by the force of bayonets, but by that of the Labour "Internationale," they were not too pleased when the United States joined in the war. In this new belligerent coming to the aid of the Allies and of Russia they only saw a new obstacle to a democratic peace. When on the 7th June President Wilson issued his Note on the objects of the war in which he said that the war must not end in the re-establishment of a *status quo ante*, that nations must not be subjugated, but that damage done should be made good, the answer to this in the *Izvestia*, the official organ of the Soviet and of Revolutionary Democracy, was as follows :

> President Wilson is mistaken if he thinks that such ideas can enter the hearts of the Revolutionary people of Russia. Russian Revolutionary Democracy knows too well and feels too

sure that the road to the passionately longed-for universal peace lies only through the united struggle of the toilers all over the world against world imperialism. It cannot be misled by any hazy and high-flown phrases. It is obvious what feelings will be aroused by the strange attempt to represent the spirit of brotherhood and peace, which is growing stronger and stronger in international Socialism, as being the result of German intrigue. That is not the language spoken by the democracy of Russia.

Other Socialistic papers followed suit. The Social Revolutionary *Dielo Naroda* (People's Cause) declared that " Liberty and right are obtained by the people by means of an internal struggle, by revolution." Gorky's half-Bolshevist *Novaia Zhizn* (New Life), in analysing the Note, says : " Only a decisive universal rupture of civil peace, only the most pitiless war on the imperialistic cliques of all countries will save Europe from plunging into savagery." This displeasure at Wilson's " imperialism " found official expression in the Note which on the 13th June, Tereshchenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs, delivered to M. A. Thomas. In that Note the Russian Government proposed to convene a conference of the Allies for the purpose of reconsidering the agreements as to the aims of the war. By this means did the Socialistic Ministers carry out part of the plan of international policy drawn up by the Soviet. Obviously this plan did not include the maintenance of friendly relations with the Socialists of Allied countries who had come to greet the Russian people, now freed from the yoke of Tsarism. They had a cool reception from the Socialist Ministers, and a still cooler one from the Soviet. And how could it be otherwise ? The new arrivals were representatives of the Socialistic majority which, in England and France, had supported the policy of defending their country against the Germans, while the Soviet, as well as Lenin, took the point of view of the

Zimmerwald minority, and had no sympathy with "chauvinist Socialists."

When the first delegation of French and English Socialists came to Russia in April, the Bolsheviks at once raised a clamour against them. On the 29th April, at a meeting of the Social-Democratic party in Moscow, convened in honour of the Allied Socialists, the Bolsheviks came forward with a declaration of protest in which they pointed out that the Socialist delegates represented the Government and not the people. The Bolsheviks reminded them that, "since the beginning of the war, part of the Socialists had forsaken the idea of class war and were in solidarity with the imperialistic *bourgeoisie*. . . . The representatives of this political tendency in England and France had taken part in Government, had entered bourgeois Ministries, and under the banner of 'War to a finish' had carried on a fierce struggle against Zimmerwald Socialists." As the delegates were representatives of the Right Socialistic wing the Bolsheviks would enter into no negotiations with them. "We consider it necessary to protest most decidedly against the claims of the delegates to speak in the name of all the Socialistic proletariat of their respective countries, and we consider it our duty to explain to Russian workmen that the majority of the French and English proletarians are far from taking a Socialist-chauvinist point of view."

Similar assertions were made by Russian Zimmerwaldists at meetings and in the Press. The French and English Socialists were forced to publish explanations that they were no pretenders, but fully qualified delegates of their respective parties, in which the majority were for carrying on a defensive policy.

The French delegates, M. Mouthey, M. Cachin, E. Lafont, reminded their hearers that among French

Socialists the rift was not by any means as great as the Bolsheviks represented. In France both the majority and the minority voted for war credits (with the exception of three votes). The English delegates, Messrs. Thorne, O'Grady, and Sanders, declared that the Independent Labour Party, to which the Bolsheviks referred, hardly represented 1 per cent of organised Labour in England.

The very necessity for entering into such explanations shows how the Allied Socialists were received. And it was not only the Bolsheviks who were hostile. The Executive Committee also issued a declaration which again showed the ambiguity of its position, so caustically pointed out in Lenin's pamphlet. The occasion for this declaration was the question asked by Mr. Philip Snowden in Parliament concerning the visit of the British delegates to Russia. The Executive Committee made haste to reply, indirectly condemning the Allied Socialists for their culpable friendliness to their respective Governments. "Being fully aware that the delegates represent only one fraction of the British Labour movement, the Executive Committee has not, however, been informed of the special relation of the British Government to its mission."

Then follows an appeal to the "Socialistic parties and trade unions of these countries, with a formal invitation to take part in the celebrations of Russian Liberty, through properly elected representatives of the whole Labour movement."

This hazy declaration is full of half-expressed condemnation and distrust of the Allied delegates who do not hold to the strictly class point of view.

Even such prominent Labour leaders as Messrs A. Henderson, Albert Thomas, and Vandervelde met with no success among the Revolutionary Democracy. But

when the Socialists of the Central Powers appeared, they were received with open arms, no questions were raised, and a confidence was shown them that disregarded not only caution but even common sense. The Austrian Otto Bauer, then a prisoner of war in Russia, took part in meetings of the Executive Committee, and after spending some days in this centre of the Revolutionary Democracy, left for Austria. An important part in the activities of the Soviet was played by the Socialists of enemy States who had come from abroad, and who continued to work for the international minority. Afterwards it was found that this internationalism was quite compatible with German imperialism, working in conjunction with the Kaiser's diplomacy. But their connection with Berlin has not been fully revealed. Both the Bolsheviks and members of the Soviet persistently demanded the abolition of secret diplomacy. They were diligently supported by the agents of the " Internationale " from abroad. But their own diplomacy, their own international connections and affairs were carefully veiled in secrecy, and only chance lifted the curtain here and there.

The greatest influence on the Soviet was wielded by Ganetski-Fürstenberg, Karl Radek, and Robert Grimm (especially the latter). The past and present activities of these heroes of Zimmerwald were exposed in the Russian press, both in the Cadet (Constitutional-Democratic) papers and in those of the national Socialists, especially in Plekhanov's *Yedinstvo* (Unity). The resulting portraits were far from attractive. Karl Radek, an Austrian Jew and a journalist, had been expelled from three Socialistic parties, from the Polish party in Galicia, from the P.P.S. in Russian Poland, and from the German Social-Democratic party. In the Lemberg Socialistic paper *Naprzód* (Forward) for

September 7, 1910, a letter was published from E. Hecker, the editor, announcing that Radek had been dismissed from the editorial staff, " not because of any difference of opinion, but because he lounged about taverns, and called for food and drink and did not pay, and because when he was on the staff of the *Naprzód* he had stolen a comrade's watch. A poor lady teacher backed a bill for him, which he did not meet, and the teacher had to pay it with her last penny. This action is ethically worse than the theft of a watch," says E. Hecker. This resulted in his comrades giving him the nickname of " Kradek," which means " thief." Hecker's letter was reprinted in 1917 in the *Rech* and was not refuted either by Radek or his friends. This petty adventurer came with Lenin from Switzerland *via* Berlin and Stockholm.

Ganetski-Fürstenberg was an adventurer on a larger scale, a collaborator with Parvus the *provocateur*, a Socialist with a very tarnished reputation. Parvus (Helfand) had grown rich, as he asserted, by corn contracts in Turkey, or, as others declared, through the generosity of the German Government. During the war Parvus settled in Copenhagen, where he opened a suspicious Socialistic bureau. His friend Ganetski-Fürstenberg had been sent out of Denmark for shady smuggling transactions. This same Ganetski was an old friend of Lenin's, and together with the latter and with Zinovieff, at the Congress of Russian Social-Democrats in Austria, they whitewashed Malinovski, the important *agent provocateur*. Malinovski had been a Social-Democratic member of the Duma, where he was an extremist, acting under double orders—those of Lenin on the one hand, and of the director of the Tsar's police on the other (the exact documents referring to this fantastic affair have been published). Through Ganetski-Fürstenberg

the Bolsheviks used to obtain large sums of money from an unknown source abroad. This was discovered after the first attempt at a *coup d'état* made by the Bolshevists in July 1917.

The activity of Robert Grimm is even more curious as characteristic not merely of Russian Socialists but of Zimmerwaldists in general. A Swiss, and the president of the Zimmerwald Conference, he had yet on August 8, 1914, voted for the Swiss army estimates, and wrote in the *Berner Tageblatt*: "Our valiant soldiers, who do their duty without a murmur, must feel behind them the unanimous support of an organised people." But it proved that this internationalist, as not infrequently happens, had two standards—one for his own country and another for Russia. As soon as the Revolution began Grimm hurried off to Russia. Milyukoff, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, knew that Grimm was not only bringing with him the resolutions of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal Conferences, but had likewise been commissioned by the German Government to prepare the ground for a separate peace. Milyukoff refused absolutely to let him into the country, in spite of all the persistence shown in the matter by the Department of Foreign Communications attached to the Soviet. When Milyukoff had to leave, Tereshchenko, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, allowed Grimm to enter Russia after Skobeleff and Tsereteli had vouched for him. Grimm was solemnly received by the Soviet, and elected member of the Executive Committee, to which the Russian Social Democrat Plekhanoff could gain no admittance. Grimm immediately began his propaganda in the barracks, preaching a separate peace with Germany.

The Mensheviks who had vouched for him were abashed. Skobeleff said they did not think that separate

peace was part of the Zimmerwald programme. But their position became distinctly delicate when on the 16th June the Provisional Government published a cipher telegram, dated 5th June, from Hoffmann, the Swiss Minister of Foreign Affairs, to M. Odiet, the Swiss *chargé d'affaires* in Petrograd. In this telegram Hoffmann commissioned M. Odiet to inform Grimm by word of mouth that "Germany will not make any further advance as long as an agreement with Russia seems possible. After conversing with people of high position I am convinced that Germany is seeking a peace with Russia, honourable to both parties." Then came the possible conditions of peace, defined in very general terms. On being made aware of the existence of this telegram, Tsereteli and Skobeleff were commissioned by the Government to call on Robert Grimm for explanations. The latter declared that he knew nothing of the matter, that he considered the telegram "a German attempt to make use of his Petrograd speeches in favour of a universal peace." But when the Socialist Ministers demanded that the Zimmerwald leader should declare publicly that "he considered such procedure on the part of the German Government a piece of underhand provocation, and the mediation of the Swiss Minister in this matter as flunkeyism and an encouragement of provocation," Grimm of course refused to do so, saying that such a declaration might be prejudicial to the neutrality of his native country. This internationalist could not afford to quarrel with his country or with Germany. The Ministers who had stood surety for him, instead of trying to penetrate further into his pacifist activity, suggested that the president of the Zimmerwald Conference should leave Russia, which he did very precipitately.

On the day after his departure there was a Congress

of Soviets at which the Left wing protested against the arbitrary expulsion of such a prominent internationalist as Grimm. The Ministers Skobeleff, Tsereteli, and Kerensky had to defend and exonerate themselves. As yet the Bolsheviks had no majority in the Soviets, and the motion by which it was found that Tsereteli and Skobeleff had acted "in accordance with the interests of the Russian Revolution and of international Socialism" was passed by a majority of 640 to 121.

Then the Bolshevist minority, together with the internationalists, billed the whole of Petrograd with invitations to meetings of protest against the expulsion of their comrade Grimm. A few days after, the official *Izvestia* No. 98 stated that the cipher telegram from Hoffmann was merely a reply to a cipher telegram from Grimm himself, in which he had described the state of affairs in Russia for the information of the German Government. "The longing for peace is universal," wrote Grimm. "Obstacles to its attainment are raised by France and difficulties made by England. At present negotiations are being carried on with them. . . . One of these days it may be expected that pressure will be put on them. The only thing that might prevent the success of negotiations would be a German advance on the eastern front. Let me know about the military aims of the Government of which you are aware, as this will guarantee negotiations."

Thus part of Robert Grimm's secret diplomacy was unmasked. He turned out to be a German agent, and had succeeded in imposing on the Russian Socialist Ministers by an impudent lie. But how could they help believing the president of the Zimmerwald Conference himself, when that Conference was to them what Church Councils were to Catholics in the Middle Ages?

While assuming an attitude of ill-concealed un-

friendliness towards the Allied Socialists, who supported their respective Governments in the struggle against Germany, the Soviet considered it its duty to take the initiative in paving the way to peace.

This Socialist-pacifist policy reflected the political outlook of the leaders of the first Soviet. The actual methods of realising this policy were as yet obscure, but the Soviet leaders knew that the Socialist Patriots who were represented by the delegates from Italy, France, and England, would not share their point of view. In the Entente countries the Socialists had proclaimed a class truce during the war with Germany. The behaviour of the German Social-Democracy had proved that the solidarity of the international proletariat could not be depended upon, whereas it was precisely on this solidarity that the Russian Revolutionary Democracy built up its hopes of a democratic peace.

One of the means towards attaining this purpose was the so-called Conference. It became the subject of endless talk and passionate arguments. Lengthy proclamations and resolutions were sown broadcast by telegraph and wireless. And although the Conference remained a mere project, nevertheless this unborn international infant had its passionate defenders and no less passionate opponents.

It is not my purpose to follow the endless and not excessively interesting history of the correspondence and intercourse between the various Socialist groups and committees upon the subject of the proposed Stockholm Conference. Especially so as many, and perchance the most interesting negotiations of all, took place in the secret recesses of international Socialist diplomacy, still jealously concealed from the criticism of public opinion.

From whom did the initiative proceed ? What was

the part played in all this by Austro-German Socialists, and what did they seek at the Conference? Did not Branting, the able and honourable Swedish Socialist, become the plaything of the no less clever but dishonest adventurer Parvus? As yet it is extremely difficult to give a precise answer to questions like these.

In any case Scheidemann's and Adler's visit to Copenhagen in April 1917 served as a stimulus for raising the question of a Socialist Conference, at which the Socialists of all belligerent countries should discuss war aims. Meanwhile Helfand-Parvus had made Copenhagen his headquarters, and thence this adroit adventurer managed his miscellaneous enterprises, such as the contraband sale of expensive drugs for the Russian Army, the supply of cheap German coal for the needs of Danish co-operative societies, revolutionary propaganda in Russia, and perhaps not in Russia alone. The coal transaction,[1] being of great advantage to the Danish Socialist party, tended to strengthen Parvus's position both in Germany and in Denmark. As is generally known, the Danish Socialists were the most energetic in advocating the meeting of the Stockholm Conference, the invitation to attend it having been brought to the Petrograd Soviet at the beginning of May 1917 by the Danish Socialist Borgbjerg. But this representative of Socialist diplomacy had the imprudence to bring in his other pocket a copy of Scheidemann's peace terms, thereby clearly establishing the connection existing between the Stockholm device and the German Social-Democrats, who supported the Kaiser's policy.

It should be noted that, from the standpoint of organised international Socialism, the preparations for the Stockholm Conference had taken an illegal course.

[1] A detailed account is given in the booklet of the French Socialist P. G. La Chesnais, *Parvus et le parti socialiste danois* (Paris).

The right of calling such a conference belonged exclusively to the Central International Bureau and to its president Vandervelde, whereas Vandervelde, as well as most of the Italian and French Socialists, was opposed to a conference with German Socialists. A separate Dutch-Scandinavian committee was therefore formed at Stockholm, and this committee assumed the initiative. Simultaneously R. Grimm was sending out invitations to yet another Socialist Assembly—the third Zimmerwald Conference. The Russian Socialists of the Centre, the then guiding spirits of the Petrograd Soviet, held the view that the victory of the Revolution laid an obligation on them to place themselves at the head of a world-wide Socialist movement. They believed that history had placed the destinies of mankind in their hands, and therefore declining all proposals of the newly-arrived Socialists, they passed the following resolution :

> The Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies assumes the initiative in the convocation of an international Socialist conference. All parties and groups of the proletariat Internationale, who are ready to adopt the platform of the Soviet message to the peoples of the world, must be invited to take part in the Conference.

It should be added that the Allied Socialists, dazzled by the revolutionary successes of their Russian comrades, did not sufficiently endeavour to sober them down nor to bring them back from the abstract realm of revolutionary formulae to the unfortunate realities of the war. Such friendly reticence only strengthened the Petrograd Soviet's childish assurance that they indeed formed the vanguard of world Socialism. Russia's poverty, the illiteracy of the masses, the absence of organisation among labour—all this faded away before the intoxicating sonority of revolutionary cant.

Upon the question of the Stockholm Conference some of the Allied Socialists seemed inclined to grant concessions to the Soviet. The British Labour leader, A. Henderson, became one of the most passionate defenders of the scheme. But upon his return to England from Russia he was met by strong opposition from the British workmen themselves. In common with their French and Belgian brothers they had not the slightest desire to meet the Germans until France and Belgium were evacuated.

The British Government learnt from a telegram of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tereshchenko, that Kerensky's Cabinet had adopted a very reserved attitude in respect to the Stockholm Conference and considered this enterprise as a purely party matter, its decisions being in nowise binding upon the Russian Government.

This was confirmed by Albert Thomas in one of his speeches: "The resolution to take part in the Conference, adopted in May, was provoked by a feeling of admiration for the Russian Revolution and the desire to lend it active support. At present it is an open secret that Kerensky no longer exhibits the same interest in the Conference." [1]

Having weighed all the alternatives in the balance, the Governments of France and England refused passports to members of the Stockholm Conference, thereby virtually sealing its fate. The organisers of the Conference desired that it should constitute a powerful peace congress dictating its will to the Governments, but not a conspirative Socialist meeting. The former

[1] This quotation, as well as certain other data concerning the Stockholm Conference, is taken from P. Milyukoff's book, *A History of the Second Russian Revolution*. He has been most friendly in allowing me the opportunity of using his MS. chapter upon "The Struggle for a Democratic Peace." The book has appeared in Kieff.

plan proved to be impossible of realisation. The Russian Socialist Centre groups proved incapable of altering the course of international relations.

It should be noted that the Bolsheviks were opposed to Stockholm. They did not wish to sit with the Socialist Patriots, who according to Bolshevist opinion had falsified the Internationale for the gratification of their governments behind the Socialists' backs.

Perhaps the Bolsheviks were also opposed to the Conference, because at the time they did not consider themselves strong enough to speak at a responsible international congress. Or perhaps they hoped that Grimm might succeed in calling a third Zimmerwald Conference, the principles of which would be sympathetic not only to the Bolsheviks but also to Socialists of the Centre.

The Socialist Ministers gradually became more familiar with the machinery of government; they gained a clearer sense of the realities and practical limitations of Russian life, and began to make earnest endeavours to frame a more sober policy. But the principles of the Zimmerwald Conference obsessed them like an evil spirit, distorting their good intentions, and drove them, sometimes against their will, along a path which led to the ruin and destruction of Russia. And in the van, a noisy and brazen mob, ran the Bolsheviks, seducing the soldiers, labourers, and peasantry with lying promises and poisonous party cries. The Revolutionary Democracy resisted, though weakly, and still tried to fight against the madness of these party cries. But it could not help itself, because many of these cries were symbols of their common faith, because its own banners, as well as those of the Bolsheviks, bore the same device—class warfare and the dictatorship of one class over the whole nation.

Professing such principles, the Revolutionary Democracy was unable either to defend its native country or to reorganise the State on the basis of the new liberty attained, or even to hold the power it had for any length of time.

Perhaps one of the explanations and even extenuations of the weakness of the Socialistic Centre may lie in the fact that it was more scrupulous and humane than the extreme Left wing. While calling on the masses to wage class warfare, the Centre, at the same time, did not desire any coercion and stopped half-way. It intoxicated and weakened the soldiers by talking about a democratic peace, but bashfully withdrew from the idea of a separate peace, justly seeing in it treachery and destruction. But the Bolsheviks feared nothing, lied always and to all, and were not squeamish as to their tools and means.

Although the whole Soviet welcomed the suspicious gang of Radek, Fürstenberg, Grimm, etc., as comrades, the latter were more akin to the Bolsheviks. Leo Deutch, the old Russian Marxist and revolutionary, was right when he wrote in the *Yedinstvo*: "Why have people of a criminal type clustered round Lenin, especially from 1903, when the split in the Russian Social-Democratic party was brought about by him, until the present time? The spirit of the *agent provocateur* naturally clung to Lenin as the inevitable consequence of his tactics, expressed in the maxim—Any means are good enough. It is known to the *chronique scandaleuse* of our party that Lenin and his assistants, Kamenieff-Rosenfeldt and Zinovieff-Radomysloff, have committed acts which are clearly criminal."

These and other accusations of the corruption of the Bolsheviks were almost daily to be met with in the pages of Russian papers, just as in every list of

the Tsarist Okhranniks (secret police) half the names were those of Bolsheviks. And among them were seen such prominent members as the deputy Malinovski, Tchernomazoff, the editor of the *Pravda* (*Truth*), Schneur, who subsequently went to conclude peace with the Germans, and many others besides.

# CHAPTER VI

## THE FIRST CONGRESS OF SOVIETS AND KERENSKY'S ADVANCE

Difficulties of the Socialist Centre—Theory and practice—The allurements of Bolshevism—The Congress of Soviets as a review of the forces of Revolutionary Democracy.

THE leniency displayed by the Soviet Centre to the Bolsheviks is to be explained by a great variety of reasons, but principally by the ties that united all Socialistic groups, woven of the imposing theories they shared in common, and also by the common memory of secret work and conspiracy together, of punishment and exile. But there was also a certain amount of involuntary subjugation of the Moderates by the Bolsheviks, for the latter were candid and unblushing demagogues, and were well skilled in the art of swaying crowds.

Bolshevist agitators and propagandists could make a far more telling appeal to the masses than could the Socialist Centre. The former enunciated the most extreme views that could be deduced from the general doctrines of Socialism, and preached them without let or hindrance in what was now the freest country in the world. The basis of the Marxist point of view is class warfare. According to this view it is an immutable law of society that secret and indirect conflict is all in

favour of privilege, and must give place to open and direct attack. Then the *bourgeoisie* will be overthrown, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, that first stage of victory, will be established. As "proletarians have no fatherland," the interests of this latter entity have to make way for those of the labouring classes.

Hence the war-cry, "Proletarians of the whole world, unite!" The view in short is that proclaimed in 1848 by Marx in his Communistic Manifesto.

The Russian Socialists of the Centre, both Social-Democrats and Social-Revolutionaries, whose programme contained all the principal points of the Marxian Manifesto, were greatly embarrassed when they suddenly found themselves masters of the situation, leaders of the democracy of their dreams. All their theories must now be put into practice, but how? By overthrowing the *bourgeoisie*? But the *bourgeoisie* itself rejoiced at the Revolution and the dawn of political liberty, and no logical grounds for conflict existed. And even if the *bourgeoisie* were hostile they were helpless, since under the old régime they had been unable to organise openly and were unwilling to do so in secret. When the Revolution broke out it was found that there was no strong bourgeois party in Russia at all. There was only the Cadet party which did not defend the interests of any one particular class. It displeased the landowners by advocating the obligatory expropriation of land, and its transference to the actual tillers of the soil; it repelled the manufacturers by endorsing the minimum Labour programme of the Social-Democrats, down to the eight-hours' day inclusive. From the Socialists themselves, however, it diverged even more radically. It strove for a government superior to class distinctions, for the preservation of the principle of property in national economics, and

for continuing the war to a finish. This was enough to raise a sharply defined barrier between the Cadets and the Socialist politicians, who were suspiciously on the look-out for counter-revolution around them. But still to the moderate Centre a rupture with the *bourgeoisie* was a thing to be avoided. From time to time warnings were heard in Soviet circles (which were still dominated by Socialists of the Centre), not to yield to the extreme Bolshevist demands for a social revolution, but to be content as yet with a political revolution.

But the glittering theories of their Marxian programme dominated them against their will, even if they could not act on them. Social-Revolutionaries preached the immediate expropriation of land (the same demand was made in the Marxian Communistic Manifesto), and Social-Democratic Ministers like Skobeleff made speeches which increased the unrest among labour. The wildest demands of the workmen, who had themselves raised their wages to an amount which no industry could stand, were instantly acceded to. The Socialist members of town corporations and Zemstvos were ruining public institutions in their eagerness to please the workmen. As a specimen of such demands I need only mention that in Petrograd the scullery-maids in the municipal hospitals, who had hitherto received board and lodging and 15 roubles a month wages, now began to get 175 roubles, while a boarding-school mistress got 120 roubles and had to keep herself. Coal-heavers received up to 80 roubles a day. When a Social-Democratic member of the Petrograd City Council, from the Plekhanoff group, proposed to replace them by soldiers, as the municipal treasury could not stand such expenditure, the Socialist majority on the City Council voted against his proposal and only passed a motion to the effect that

the Executive Committee of the Soviet should be informed that the demands of the workmen were ruinous to the town.

In the beginning of May the manufacturers came to Prince Lvoff with a declaration regarding the condition of the industries, which were being ruined by the laziness of the workmen, by the absence of all discipline in factories, by the mad increase in wages, and by the fact that engineers, directors, and all the educated managing staff in general were in constant fear of coercion on the part of the operatives. The elective principle had been introduced in the works, and frequently some clever adventurer, quite unfitted for the task, was placed at the head of affairs. The declaration of the manufacturers produced no impression. The Government could do nothing, having no organised force at its back. And the Left parties, including the Bolsheviks, openly declared that this was as it should be, that the workmen ought to expel the owners and engineers, and take everything into their own hands. The Soviet and the Socialists connected with it did not know what to do, first urging the workmen on, then calling on them to keep themselves in hand. At the very beginning of the Revolution, on the 20th March, the *Izvestia* said that "If any owner of an undertaking, who was dissatisfied with the demands made by the workmen, refused to carry on the business, then the workmen must resolutely insist on the management of the work being given over into their hands, under the supervision of a commissary of the Soviet" (see No. 8). This was the "control" which was afterwards so fully utilised by the Bolsheviks. A little later, frightened at the anarchy which had broken out at the works, the *Izvestia* began to speak of the thoughtlessness of such reconstruction, of disorganisation, of

everything having its limits, and of the impossibility of satisfying all demands (see No. 81).

But if there was any criticism, or any one pointed out that both the soldiers and workmen were losing their heads, that discipline was as necessary in the industrial army as in the military, then the Soviet orators grew angry. Tsereteli, with his usual impetuosity, speaking at the meeting of the Soviets held on the 11th April, said: "They say that the workmen are not standing at their lathes and are not working. All the democratic authorities declare this to be a foul slander and the first Congress of Soviets must conform this." The Congress of course declared it to be a libel, but the workmen did not work any the better for that.

When they entered the Government the Socialists found themselves in a still more difficult position. The principles of the programme did not work out in practice. Skobeleff, the Minister of Labour, at first promised to put all capitalists under a hydraulic press. Later, however, he issued a circular addressed to the workmen, in which he said: "The seizure of factories makes workmen without any experience in management and without working capital temporarily masters of such undertakings, but soon leads to their being closed down, or to the subjugation of the workmen to a still harder taskmaster" (*Izvestia*, No. 103).

These are not the words simply of a Minister but of a Socialist Minister. But whom were the workmen to obey, if at the same time the Bolshevist members of the same united Social-Democratic party to which Skobeleff belonged were urging them to make haste and seize everything before the *bourgeoisie* had time to organise a counter-revolution? Why should they not disarm the *bourgeoisie* by means of such seizures,

if the Soviet itself were constantly dinning it into their ears that the chief foes were the "property-owning classes," if even Ministers loudly proclaimed that they had entered the Cabinet for the purpose of exacerbating class warfare? Such contradictions were constantly to be met with, and were clearly seen at the Congress of Soviets held in Petrograd (16th June to 6th July). The Congress was composed of 1090 delegates. Of these 285 were Social-Revolutionaries, 248 Mensheviks, 105 Bolsheviks, and 32 Internationalists. The other Socialistic groups had very few representatives. The Populist Socialists numbered only eleven.

At this Congress the new democracy reviewed its forces and ideals. As yet the Soviets had neither legislative nor executive powers, but their influence on State affairs was already predominant. The motions passed at these wordy sittings were no mere verbal exercises, but practically affected the life of Russia. And yet the speeches still reflected the same old hazy dogmatism of the irresponsible party Congresses, though some orators, especially the Socialist Ministers, were already making desperate efforts to find a more practical way. They struggled with the extreme wing. They tried to find a position where their Socialistic ideology would not be at variance with the interests of the Russian State. The boldest opponent of the Bolsheviks was Kerensky, then Minister of War. A regular duel took place between him and Lenin. At that time Kerensky was preparing for the summer advance against the Germans, that last desperate attempt of Revolutionary Democracy to solve the insoluble problem —to make the soldiers fight after having freed them from all bonds of discipline.

Kerensky had already visited the front. Clothed now with authority he had got a nearer view of what

went on in the barracks, at the rear and at the front. He said, turning to the Bolsheviks: "The policy of fraternisation coincides with that of the German General Staff, which hides itself behind Zimmerwald watchwords. We must show more caution towards Zimmerwald, lest we play into the hands of Germany." [1]

Tsereteli exerted all his southern eloquence in support of his fellow-Minister. He even ventured to defend the right of the Russian Army to advance. He put the question to the Congress as to whether it were necessary to advance, and from various benches came the answer, "It is!" Only the Bolsheviks laughed in reply. Perhaps it was because even then they knew better than their less extreme associates to what a state the army had been reduced by the incoherent and criminal propaganda of Socialist agitators.

Lenin determinedly opposed the advance which would only prolong the war. Another Bolshevik, Riazanoff, demanded that no punitive measures should be taken against deserters, as that would be interference with the liberty of citizens. And a member of the same party, Ensign Krylenko, a half-insane young man later raised by the Bolsheviks to the high rank of Commander-in-Chief, reproached Kerensky in his report on the army with doing nothing for its democratisation. He said that the soldiers were murmuring, "The combing out of Generals has been done from below,

[1] The day before this Milyukoff made a long speech about Zimmerwald in the Duma Committee. "Working on parallel lines with the ideologists of Zimmerwald, the German agents attain objects which please, on the one hand, our extreme parties, and on the other, the German Government. . . . Lenin and Trotsky, who advocate perpetual revolution, and their comrades, who have sinned against all the articles of the penal code, are proceeding unhindered to carry infection into society and into the army." Milyukoff demanded that the Government should arrest Lenin. But though his estimate was practically the same as Milyukoff's, Kerensky did not go so far as his political opponent demanded. Trotsky called Milyukoff "a dishonourable slanderer" for the expressions quoted above. No voice on the Soviet was raised to protest against this attack, for Milyukoff was an Imperialist, and Lenin—a comrade.

while now we are being ordered from above to obey unconditionally."

The Congress listened to these Bolshevist speeches. It did not approve, neither did it protest against their mad criminality in fomenting mischief in the whole army. The degree of political intelligence at the Congress was quite indefinite. First, it riotously applauded Plekhanoff's passionate appeals to fight the Germans, and then immediately passed the following motion on the war :

" The termination of the war by the defeat of one group of belligerents would be the source of new wars, making the breach between nations still wider." The idea of a separate peace was rejected by the Congress, for the reason that it would " increase the tendency of the dominant classes towards annexation, would not free Russia from the grip of world imperialism, and would make the international union of the labouring classes more difficult." In short, there was a complete confusion of ideas.

No attempt was to be made to gain a victory over Germany, but neither was a separate peace to be concluded. This formula, enunciated by the Soviet State in July 1917, was very similar to Trotsky's later famous motto : " Neither peace nor war."

In the motion passed by the Congress of Soviets on the war, there was not one word to encourage the army to military activity. All hopes were centred on the " earthly establishment of revolutionary internationalism," on an appeal to democracies to join in the cry of " peace without annexation and indemnities. . . . The war can only be ended by the united efforts of the democracies of all countries. . . . This is not a unity in warfare, but solidarity of labour."

Lenin put the matter more simply. He demanded

that an ultimatum should be sent to the Allies; did they or did they not agree to reconsider the aims of the war in accordance with the programme of the Petrograd Soviet?

The Minister Tsereteli and his colleagues likewise tried to get the Allied Governments to agree to such a revision, but they did not see the possibility of presenting such an ultimatum, and wished to carry on negotiations with the Allied Democracies. In this, as in many other questions, they differed from the Bolsheviks not as regards objects but in tactics.

The Congress was more occupied with disputes about the war and about government than with social problems. Nevertheless, an agrarian resolution was passed, the first clause being: "The land with its mineral wealth, water and timber rights, must be withdrawn from the market. The sovereign right to dispose of land must belong to the whole people, who must administer it through the democratic institutions of self-government." Thus the Congress acknowledged the principle of the nationalisation of land and a complete rupture of all existing agrarian relations. They took no account whatever of the impossibility of carrying out such a reform at a time when disorganisation of food-supplies and national economy was so complete that the description given by the Food Minister, Peshekhonoff, and the Minister of Labour, Skobeleff, gave a sobering shock to their listeners. But the Bolsheviks, in Lenin's person, at once turned this impression to advantage by suggesting a simple way out of all difficulties. Let them take the power into their own hands by arresting the capitalists and all would be well. The Congress could neither agree to this nor find any other issue.

The majority of the members of the Congress professed economic materialism, but even the stern

voice of economic reality could not bring them to their senses, and make them cast away revolutionary romanticism. For they could not be guided by the practical necessities of storm-tossed Russia, when, according to their exponent Lieber, "the Russian Revolution had to settle social questions involving the interests of every worker in the world."

These beginners in statecraft were far more concerned about the Stockholm Conference, and the creation of a "coalition of the Labouring Democracies of the world," than about the defence and organisation of Russia.

Now Russian affairs were very much on the decline. During the first three months after the Revolution both the military and the economic situation had grown still worse than under the Tsar. The people, freed from the stifling prison of Tsarism, were drunk with unwonted liberty as with wine. They understood liberty as the possibility of throwing aside all forms of obligation, all discipline, and with it all ideas of duty. This is a painful process, an inevitable fermentation accompanying every revolution. In Russia it was intensified by war-weariness, the ignorance of the masses, and the dogmatic narrowness and blindness of those who had undertaken to lead them. Little by little, not hearing any words of real denunciation and stern rebuke, not meeting with any serious rebuff either from the Government or the Soviet, the masses became unbridled in their actions, they grew accustomed only to demand and to give nothing in return. They had not yet attained either to an idea of a State or of any real feeling of responsibility and duty, and, nevertheless, at all the meetings it was dinned into them, "All is now yours, take it and reign." Political liberty, which to the educated classes and to the more thoughtful repre-

sentatives of the people was in itself something of absolute value, did not bring any real change into the life of millions of poorer Russian citizens of either sex.

What is the good of liberty when one has, as heretofore, to sit in the trenches, work at the factory, perform dreary, toilsome labour, and to plough the land—often another man's ? And inevitably a wave of economic social demands arose. These were the same demands which all the Socialistic programmes promised to satisfy, and therefore the majority of the leaders not only lacked the courage to raise obstacles to the unrealisable desires of the masses, but frequently prompted and incited them. In questions of State authority, the Soviets, holding the class and not the democratic point of view, could likewise do nothing to instil ideas of discipline and order.

Already in April 1917 all kinds of independent republics began to be formed all over Russia. Some country town, led by an enterprising Soviet, and sometimes by a lunatic or a " black-gang " Tsarist, would declare itself independent. At first such news merely raised a laugh. At the beginning of the Revolution every one was in a good humour, and was prepared to regard the wildest escapades as innocent child's play. But already in June it became clear that this was no chance game of local politicians, but a sign of an insidious disease of the State. Tsaritsin, Kherson, Kirsanov, Kostroma, Ekaterinburg, Irkutsk, Helsingfors, Cronstadt —all declared themselves autonomous. Nevertheless, they still demanded money from the Provisional Government. And the Government gave it, partly from weakness, partly on the old theory of non-resistance. Thus the resources of the Russian State Treasury endowed all these independent new republics.

At the same time numerous races inhabiting Russia attempted to apply the principle of self-determination to their own case. The old autocratic régime was dead. The new had not yet been born. What it would be like, what it ought to be, no one as yet knew. Some said that Russia must be a federal republic, others considered that wide powers of local government in an undivided State would be sufficient. The Soviet took the first point of view, and accordingly supported the claims of the different nationalities. Lenin went still further and maintained that Finland, Poland, Esthonia, Courland, the Ukraine, and Transcaucasia were all annexed provinces which had the right to secede from Russia.

Finland wanted complete secession from Russia, thereby creating a military menace to the whole north of Russia and the Baltic Fleet. In the south a group of the intelligentsia, supported from Vienna, had begun agitating in favour of the foundation first of an autonomous and then of an independent Ukraine. This gave the first impulse to that ruinous civil war between the south and the north of Russia, owing to which so much blood has been and is still being spilt.

But at that time, in July 1917, few people clearly understood all the destructiveness of these local separatist demands. On the other hand every one saw the military danger of the situation in Finland at the two naval ports of Helsingfors and Cronstadt, where almost the whole of the Baltic Fleet was concentrated. Into these places, almost from the very first days of the Revolution, German agents had wormed their way, and a successful Bolshevist propaganda had been carried on with the inevitable accompaniment of a systematic massacre of officers. Notwithstanding the enormous strategic importance of these ports, Prince Lvoff's Cabinet did not even attempt to struggle with

the secessionists or to save these naval bases from criminal agitators, both German and Russian.

When, on the 1st July, Cronstadt declared itself an independent republic, and made Roshal, a student twenty years of age, President, the Government supinely carried on negotiations with this boy, and let him indicate whom they were to appoint as Government Commissary. But when the naval officers, who had been arrested during the first few days of the Revolution, were imprisoned in the Cronstadt torture house, even the Soviet found it necessary to interfere and to issue an appeal containing the following words :

> It depends on the inhabitants of Cronstadt whether the black spot on the revolutionary horizon will disappear for ever, or grow larger and larger, until it obscures the rising sun of Liberty.

Fortunately, besides this appeal, they also sent delegates, who succeeded in having the officers brought to trial. The trial disclosed revolting particulars of mob-law and insults inflicted in most cases on totally innocent men. The majority of the persons arrested were set free. But the fleet was rapidly rotting in the same way as the army.

As early as the end of May, Kirpichnikoff—the famous private of the Volhynsky Regiment, who could hardly be accused of being counter-revolutionary since in March he was the first to lead the soldiers against the old Government—wrote an open letter to Prince Lvoff, in which he called upon the Government to fight against anarchy, saying, " The fraternisation with Germans at the front and criminal leniency in the rear are crimes of equal magnitude against our country. . . . The Revolutionary Army cannot remain inactive before the enemy, or the Revolutionary Government before sedition."

This was one of many appeals made from all sides. The officers, insulted, constantly subjected to degradation, given over to the control of the soldiery by Order No. 1, lived in an atmosphere of suspicion and insults. But nevertheless they tried to organise, although the Soviets and then the Committees looked very much askance at officers' organisations. In consequence of perpetual threats there grew up among the officers a tendency to display subserviency to their new masters, the soldiers. The position of honest patriots in the army became more and more difficult. Later, at the Moscow Congress, General Alexeieff defined the position of the officers in the following bitter words : " The best officers are perishing, the worst are becoming thorough scoundrels."

In the summer of 1917 preparations were already being made for the coming wholesale massacre of officers. They were systematically discredited in the eyes of the masses ; counter-revolutionaries were most diligently sought for among their number, although it was well known that the regular officers, who had more of the spirit of caste, had been killed off during the first years of the war, and that by the time the Revolution broke out the army was officered by men of all classes—sons of the clergy, petty employees, peasants.

As has already been mentioned, the very first Officers' Congress, at which Alexeieff made his prophetic speech, drew down upon itself the acute displeasure of the Soviet. But still the Officers' League was organised.

In June another Officers' Congress was held in Petrograd, with an attendance of five hundred. Now there was already a certain rift in their ranks, part of the officers going with the Soviet, more anxious to impregnate the army with the political opinions of Revolutionary Democracy than to make it efficient.

The other party demanded that the Provisional Government should be fully supported and trusted, since with divided authority there could be no powerful army.

After a hot discussion, a motion was passed demanding the enactment of a law punishing " the non-fulfilment of military orders at the front." The following clause in the motion is of special importance :

> The work of the Army Committees shall be restricted, within clearly defined limits, to economic, social, cultural, and educational questions, and a decided struggle should be carried on against the tendency to put into practice the election of commanders, and the corporate direction of military operations.

The question as to how far the principle of election might be carried out in the army, and the limits of the jurisdiction of the Committees, was one of the sorest points of the revolutionary period. Subsequently, the first serious conflict between General Korniloff, Commander-in-Chief, and the Premier, Kerensky, arose on this very subject.

Already by the middle of the summer of 1917 we see the melancholy results of the Committee muddling, which converted the army from a disciplined body, united by the will of the commanders, into a mob of meeting-attending and (alas !) thieving tattlers.

The most tragic news came from all parts of the army. During the first half of June there was a regular mutiny in Shcherbatcheff's army. Four regiments were cashiered for refusing to obey military orders. The cavalry surrounded and disarmed them. But the ringleaders were not shot. The Government merely published an appeal, and Kerensky spoke of the shamefulness of fraternising with the German soldiers and selling them Russian bread.

This was at the very time when Kerensky, as War

Minister, went to the front, trying to arouse the spirit of the Russian soldiers by his eloquence.

In one of his speeches the Socialist Minister announced to the regiments gathered round him that, as they had managed to fight so courageously under the yoke of Tsardom, they had even more cause to perform miracles of bravery now, when fighting for liberty and land. One of the soldiers asked with a grin: "And if I am killed, what land shall I get then?"

In these simple words we see the psychology of millions of peasants in soldiers' tunics. One after another they left the front, deserting to hurry home, for fear that the land would be re-allotted without them, and that they would get nothing.

Kerensky was a great success at the front, especially among the young soldiers of revolutionary but not Bolshevist tendencies. But his desire was chiefly for popularity among the soldiers; he did not seem to understand the importance of the officers, and during his stay at the front did nothing whatever either to support their authority or improve the discipline of the army.

And, indeed, what conception of discipline could be left in the mind of a soldier who for three years had served as a private in the Tsar's army, with its severities and brutal subordination, when the Minister of War himself appeared before him, and in answer to his address of "General," he was answered by Kerensky, "I am not a General, but a comrade"?

At this time the *Okopnaia Pravda* (Trench Truth) and other Bolshevist and non-Bolshevist papers were carrying on an anti-war propaganda, undermining all confidence in the commanders and the whole Government. The Bolsheviks knew that the front was preparing for an advance, and tried to prevent it by making

an advance in the rear—on the Government. The other Socialists became agitated. Soviet orators went the round of the factories and works, proving that the Bolsheviks wanted to "stab the Revolution in the back." And the Bolsheviks kept declaring that the Congress of Soviets—where their motion had been rejected—was composed of Imperialists and landed gentry, and that the whole Coalition Government had sold itself to the *bourgeoisie*.

The offended comrades of the Bolsheviks openly called them "traitors and betrayers of the Revolution" (*Workmen's Gazette*—a Menshevist organ). Nevertheless, the Soviet appointed a demonstration for the 1st July, to show democratic solidarity and to intimidate counter-revolutionists, who were more and more feared in Soviet circles.

On the day fixed for this demonstration, Petrograd discovered that our army had made an advance near Brzezany, captured part of the German trenches, and taken 10,000 prisoners. It would seem that the whole capital ought to have celebrated this first victory of the revolutionary army.[1] But only the intelligentsia, officers, women, and disabled soldiers took part in the demonstration hastily got up by the Cadets and Plekhanoff. The soldiers sneered. In Peterhof the famous machine-gunners thrashed the military cadets who took part in the demonstration. The workmen in the town took no part whatever in the manifestations. Kerensky had already lost his popularity among the Social-Revolutionaries. At the Congress of this party, he was not elected to the Central Committee. But the Executive Committee of the

[1] Even the dethroned and imprisoned Tsar marked this as a day of gladness, as may be seen in his diary, published by the Bolsheviks in the summer of 1918.

Soviet still supported him, as well as its other representatives in the Government.

The furious pacifist propaganda, which for three months had been so madly carried on by extreme Socialists, now bore fruit, although the same Congress, which had passed the motion on the "danger of the defeat of any of the belligerents," was obliged, in answer to Kerensky's triumphant telegram, to send a fraternal greeting "to the democratic organisation of soldiers and officers tempered in the fire of the Revolution, who are shedding their blood on the field of battle." But the Soviet added a rider to the effect that "it is not our fault that the war is still going on." They emphasised their opinion that the result of the successful advance did not lie in the victory over the Germans, but in the fact that "Your organised strength, as proved by this advance, gives weight to the voice of revolutionary Russia in speaking to the belligerent, Neutral and Allied countries, and will help to end the war."

Thus, even when military operations were resumed, the Soviet placed both the Allies and the Central Powers on the same footing, not once using the word "enemy." But it was perhaps for the first time that the word "Motherland" had been used in an official document. "No one in these days dare evade doing his duty to his Motherland." Hitherto they had only spoken of duty to the Revolution.

Possibly this divergence from international phraseology may have been due to the influence of the more moderate, sober, and patriotic Soviet of Peasants' Delegates, whose signatures stand at the bottom of the Manifesto.

This document (printed on the 3rd July) is a typical example of the ambiguous position of the Soviet in fundamental problems of State.

When the particulars of the advance began to arrive, the joy of the patriots was rapidly damped. It turned out that the principal part had been played by the officers. It was they who advanced, often alone, without their soldiers. Whole units did not wish to obey orders, and held sittings and meetings, disputing and discussing whether to advance or not. The same soldiers who in the Tsar's time advanced without a murmur, and though almost unarmed, and without the support of artillery, performed the most difficult operations—now, with unheard-of quantities of munitions, under undreamt-of conditions of liberty, proved they had lost the spirit of an army.

Such was the ruin wrought in the army by revolutionary seasoning and democratic organisation, which, however, should be more justly termed anarchistic disorganisation.[1] And day by day its fruits became more evident.

[1] It must be pointed out that when Trotsky (who of course was loudest in his demands for the sovereign rights of Soldiers' Committees) was organising the Red Army, he abolished the Committees, and replaced them by the old discipline of sole command.

## CHAPTER VII

### REAR AND FRONT BROKEN THROUGH

Independent Ukraine and the Ministerial crisis—The July Bolshevist insurrection—German advance—Front broken through—Disputes about Capital Punishment—State of the army—The "Save the Revolution!"—The Committees or powerful Government?

In July a series of very important events took place, which gave a clear idea of the extent of Russia's dissolution.

The whole period from the entry of the Socialists into the Cabinet early in May, until the November Bolshevist revolution, is full of the tragically futile attempts of the Soviet Centre to effect a transition from the Zimmerwald position to that of State responsibility. Although the Revolutionary Democracy with all the sincerity of despair tried to rally round Kerensky's Government, and gave all its strength, all its best men, this transition proved impossible. There was no opposition from the Right. In spite of all the acuteness of the difference of opinions, both the Constitutional-Democrats and the employers' party in Moscow sent their members to the Cabinet, although after every crisis it became more and more difficult to find a common language, since the Socialists were obstinately pursuing the path of class government as opposed to national. The Left wing, *i.e.* the majority of the Social-Democrats and part of the Social-Revolutionaries,

carried on an incessant agitation, both secret and open, striving to obtain the immediate introduction of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The doctrinal exponent of this group was Lenin, while the practical executor was Trotsky. In reality, Chernoff, the Social-Revolutionary, was also working in that direction. The Socialist Centre could not withstand the pressure put upon it. Trusting neither the *bourgeoisie* nor the Radicals, the Centre gradually went over to the Left, lost its footing and fell, dragging after it the whole of the Russian population, in whose name the first and second Soviets had acted.

Bound to the Bolsheviks by their primary ideas and programme, the Socialists of the Centre, even after the July insurrection, could not break away from their "comrades-in-ideas." Meanwhile, in July, both the Bolsheviks and the Germans almost simultaneously managed to break through the rear and front respectively.

Considering the vastness of Russia, the complicated network of military operations, the national, economic, party, and class conflicts,—the general chaos entailed by every revolution,—it is no easy matter to reconstruct the real history of the Russian Revolution, or even of separate episodes. It is still more difficult to fix exactly where the casual and elemental end, and forethought, intention, and planning begin. But there are certain coincidences, at whose meaning we may guess.

On the night of the 16th July a Bolshevist insurrection broke out in Petrograd. It coincided with certain other events which shook the stability of the Russian State, with the declaration of the independence of the Ukraine, the Government crisis, and the German advance.

The dismemberment of Russia, aflame with revolution, began all over her vast area (on August 1, 1914,

Russia occupied one-sixth of the whole surface of the earth).

First separate towns and boroughs, then whole provinces, would declare their independence. And the weaker the Revolutionary Government grew, the more strongly was the separatist tendency of the component parts felt. This is partly explained by the lawful feeling of self-preservation, by the desire to shield oneself from infection, anarchy, and political dissolution. But it was likewise to a great extent due to political adventure and personal ambition.

The history of the Ukraine secession bears obvious traces of both one and the other of the aforesaid causes. Strictly speaking, the Ukraine, as a definite political or even ethnological whole, never existed. In bygone days Kiev was the capital of ancient Russia. The inhabitants of a part of Southern Russia, *i.e.* the provinces of Poltava, Chernigov, Kiev, Volhynia, and Podolia, speak the South Russian language or dialect. Philologists are still disputing as to whether this may be called a language. Apparently it would be more correct to consider that there are three dialects of the common Russian language, namely, the Great Russian, White Russian, and Little Russian. The last is likewise spoken by the Ruthenians in Galicia. For several centuries the South Russian provinces lived the same life as the rest of the Russian Empire, and together with the rest of the population established both the Russian State and Russian culture. But in addition Little Russia had her own culture, her own folklore, her own customs, her own songs, and even her own literature—the latter very poor as compared with that of Russia as a whole. There were some far from numerous circles among the educated classes who made it their aim to arouse the national Ukraine spirit. They were unsuccessful. The

Tsar's Government, with its usual despotic narrowness and blind centralisation, fought against these as yet purely cultural aspirations of the Ukraine patriots by means of brutal repression. It was even forbidden to print books in the Little Russian dialect, and the works of their poet Shevchenko could for a long time circulate only in manuscript. When at last books and newspapers were allowed to be printed, the common people simply failed to understand them, since for the expression of the more complex, more abstract ideas, the Ukrainists employed the so-called Lvov or Lemberg language, which is entirely unfamiliar to the peasantry of Southern Russia.

The use of the Lvov literary language by the Ukrainians of Southern Russia to-day has a more than philological significance. Those Ukrainians who under the Tsar's régime found it impossible to work in Russia, took refuge among the kindred population of Eastern Galicia, where, under the protection of the Austrian Government, who sought in them a counterpoise to Polish influence and a lever for weakening Russia, they established in Lemberg a Ukrainian national and literary centre. The movement was fostered not only from Vienna, but from Berlin. The idea of enfeebling Russia by creating an independent Ukraine was a favourite theme of aggressive Austrian and German politicians before the war; and during the war a so-called "League for the Liberation of the Ukraine" was one of the chief instruments of the propaganda of the Central Powers in Eastern Europe. The Russian Government watched this movement with the greatest suspicion, and shortly after the war began, closed down in Russia the Ukrainian Press, the long-standing restrictions on which had been relaxed after 1905. The Revolution restored to the Ukrainians liberty of action,

and Kiev became the centre of a new national movement in which both hitherto quiescent Russian Ukrainians and Ukrainians from Galicia took a very active part. It should be added that the ardour of the Galician Ukrainians was stimulated by the political oppression they had suffered after the Russian occupation of Galicia.

In May a Congress assembled in Kiev loosely representing several parties, chiefly Socialists, which had adopted the Ukrainian national programme, and also a number of Ukrainian educational and co-operative organisations in the south of Russia. This Congress was very demonstrative in its assertion of Ukrainian autonomy or home rule, but it was not separatist—indeed the separatists were at this stage in a very small minority. The chief work of the Congress was to elect a sort of permanent parliament or Rada, which is the Ukrainian for Soviet or Council. At first this Rada had no place in the Russian administrative system. It was a purely private institution. The representative of the Provisional Government in Kiev, as in other parts of Russia, was a Commissary (in place of the former Governor-General) who took counsel with a local Committee representing all parties and all sections of the population. But the Ukrainian Rada was a very active organising centre, and made every effort to enforce its views both on the local Commissary and the military authorities, and on the Central Government. It engaged in agitation among the peasantry and among the troops, and played, in fact, in Kiev the part that in Petrograd was played by the extreme Socialists. Its nationalist propaganda was reinforced by demagogic Socialist appeals.

The primary aim of the Ukrainians was to create a force which would help them to attain their national objects. They urged the Government to form Ukrainian

regiments out of the Southern Russian soldiers in the army. The Government, on the advice of the military authorities, refused. Thereupon the Ukrainians formed in Kiev two regiments of their own, consisting chiefly of deserters, and seized the necessary arms and ammunition from the military stores. This act of violence led to disorders, ending in concessions and compromise. The Rada had strengthened its position by sheer daring, by the exercise of unlimited bluff. As in Petrograd, so in Kiev the Provisional Government was unwilling to use force to check the process of disintegration, and the Ukrainian leaders, Professor Grushevsky, the literary leader of the movement in Lemberg, the Russian Ukrainian novelist Vinichenko, the insurance agent Petliura, and other lesser lights were emboldened by their unexpected success. Early in July they formed a scheme for the autonomous administration of the indefinite area called the Ukraine, and flourished it threateningly in the face of the Provisional Government.

The Government, instead of giving an immediate reply, decided to delegate two of its members, Tsereteli and Tereshchenko, to Kiev to investigate the situation and report, but not to take any decision. It so happened that Kerensky and Nekrasoff were in Kiev at the time, and they took part unofficially in the negotiations with the leaders of the Rada. Somehow the Ukrainians succeeded in so impressing the young Russian Ministers with the seriousness of the situation that these latter consented to a ready-made scheme for the establishment of a Ukrainian General Secretariat or Autonomous Government for the administration of the Ukraine. The only important alteration in the scheme put forward by the Rada was the limitation of the territory in question from nine provinces to five. The Russian Ministers exceeded their powers by signing an agree-

ment, wired that they had done so, and on July 14 returned to Petrograd to report.

The Cadet members of the Government raised strong objections to the whole proceeding. On the strength of independent reports they denied that the situation in the Ukraine was so serious as to necessitate such a far-reaching concession. Further they insisted that Tsereteli and Tereshchenko had exceeded their instructions in signing an agreement, and they denied the right of the Government to predetermine the mutual relations between the various parts of Russia, since such questions could only be decided by the Constituent Assembly. Nekrasoff declared that the scheme had the character of an ultimatum, and must be accepted as it stood. After a heated debate the majority of the Ministers present accepted Nekrasoff's point of view. Thereupon Shingareff and the other Cadet Ministers resigned on the ground that they could not be parties in a grossly illegal act. That was in the evening of July 14. On the following day this serious Ministerial crisis was overshadowed by much graver events.

From that time on, the Ukrainian movement gathered strength and became more and more extreme, until after the Bolshevist rising in November the Rada proclaimed the complete independence of the Ukraine, and, after various misadventures, concluded a few months later a separate peace with Germany. The stand made by the Cadets against the dismemberment of Russia was severely condemned by the moderate Socialists, who regarded continual concessions as the only possible form of tranquil and orderly government. They lived to rue their error.

The Government, after the retirement of the Cadets, maintained a feeble and unhappy existence throughout the throes of a violent crisis, which ended in the resigna-

tion of Prince Lvoff, and the constitution of a third Provisional Government with Kerensky as Premier.

From that moment the predominance of the Socialists in the Government was assured, and therefore they may be considered responsible for all the acts and all the failures to act of the authorities.

At the time of this Ministerial crisis, and while negotiations were being carried on in regard to the new Ministers and their programmes, the Germans broke through the Russian line, and the Bolsheviks made an attempt to break through the rear. On the night of the 16th–17th of July they instigated part of the Petrograd garrison to leave their barracks, and led them to the Taurida Palace, in order to force the Soviet to proclaim itself the Government. The Bolsheviks also summoned two warships from Cronstadt, manned by Bolshevist sailors. Armoured cars and motor-lorries with machine-guns began to rush up and down the streets of the astonished capital. On all sides there was a splutter of random firing. Not only the victims, but even those who were shooting had a very vague idea of what was the matter, or of whom they were fighting against.

The firing went on for two days, during which Lenin, Trotsky, Lunacharsky, and other Bolshevist orators made speeches from the balcony of Kchesinska's house, inciting the mob to overthrow the Government and take the power into their own hands. The Executive Committee of the Soviet in session at the Taurida Palace was in danger and asked for help, for the exhortations of Tchernoff and Prince Tsereteli, who tried to address the mob, nearly led to the arrest of the orators. Cossacks were sent to the assistance of the Soviet, and were fired at by workmen with machine-guns. The Bolsheviks tried to seize the Intelligence Depart-

ment where the information concerning German spies was concentrated. But they were driven off by the disabled soldiers, who in general showed no little steadiness and shrewdness in those days of general confusion and dismay. The other regiments, *i.e.* the notorious Petrograd garrison, who were now transformed into a well-fed, lazy, revolutionary Pretorian guard, looked on indifferently at the Bolshevist insurrection. Even then some one found a vindication of the indifference: "We don't want to spill the blood of our brothers," that is, to interfere in civil war.

The Government was at a complete loss. It was only the day before, on Sunday evening, that the Cadet Ministers had left the Cabinet. Kerensky had gone off to the front. The insurrection of the Bolsheviks took place on Monday night. All Tuesday, Prince Lvoff was practically the sole representative of the Government, and his only guard were the disabled soldiers.

So little did the Revolutionary Democracy realise what was happening, so little was it inclined to regard the Bolsheviks as enemies of the people, that at the time when the Bolshevist machine-guns were shooting down the peaceful crowds in the streets, the Social-Revolutionary Gr. Schreider, Mayor of the Petrograd City Council, which had been already re-elected under the new universal suffrage law, announced that he had opened soup-kitchens for the Cronstadt sailors. And the Socialist majority of the Council were indignant when the Cadet members announced that they saw no necessity to feed the sailors who had come to Petrograd to shoot peaceful citizens and overthrow the Government.

But however weak Prince Lvoff's Government might be, it still was firm enough to crush the insurrection by armed force. It still had at its disposal

some disciplined troops, capable of carrying out orders. Troops were called out, and surrounded Kchesinska's house and the barracks of the machine-gun regiment, the principal stronghold of Bolshevism. Seeing that matters were taking an unpleasant turn, the sailors made haste to go back to Cronstadt. Three days after the insurrection was put down, almost without bloodshed. Public opinion expressed its indignation. On all sides were heard demands that decisive measures should be taken against the insurgents, who had tried to bring about a civil war. The Central Committee of the Cadet party passed a resolution demanding the immediate arrest of Lenin and his accomplices, and the protection of the freedom of Russia from any fresh attempts of this kind. The Government ordered the ringleaders to be tried. Measures were taken to disarm the principal supporters of Bolshevism—the machine-gun regiments and the Red Army (the formation of which had at one time been advocated by the *Izvestia*). Searches and arrests were ordered. It seemed as if at last the Government were going to fight for the establishment of a firm authority. The Soviet seemed as though it were ready to support the Government. In one of its appeals it said that these street manifestations "amounted to treachery. Whoever makes an attempt in the rear to coerce the will of the plenipotentiaries of Democracy, is plunging a dagger into the back of the Revolutionary Army now fighting against the Kaiser's troops, and is stirring up civil war in its ranks."

But here again the Revolutionary Democracy stopped half-way, and could not muster enough courage or good sense to draw the logical conclusions from the behaviour of its Left wing. On the 20th July, three days after the insurrection, Alexinsky, a Social-Democrat

of the Plekhanoff group, and the Social-Revolutionary Pankratieff (an old revolutionary) wrote to the papers saying that they had documentary proofs that the Bolsheviks had received money from Berlin, through Stockholm. Even the banks were named: the Disconto Gesellschaft, Nya Bank, the Siberian Bank. The names of the intermediaries were also given: Parvus, Ganetsky, Sumenson, and Kozlovsky. The first result of this disclosure was that Alexinsky was not admitted to the Soviet. The papers raised a cry that the Bolsheviks had received money from the Germans, and the Soviet promised to make a strict inquiry into the matter, but begged that there might be "no expression of opinion with regard to the events or to comrade Lenin." One must contrast this careful attitude towards the Bolsheviks who, according to the words of the Soviet itself, had plunged a dagger into the back of the army, with the ease with which the Soviet discredited and insulted the Russian officers, generals, and statesmen of the defencist camp, in order to understand what were the hopes, and where lay the sympathies, of the Revolutionary Democracy.

Kerensky, Minister of War, reported to the Government on the ruinous effect the events of Petrograd and Bolshevist propaganda were having on the troops at the front. After some debate, orders were given for the arrest of Lenin, Zinovieff, Kamenieff, Trotsky, and others. In the wireless message sent by Kerensky to various places it was declared: "It has been proved without any doubt that the disorders in Petrograd were organised with the help of the agents of the German Government. At the present time the disorders have been completely suppressed. The ringleaders and persons who have been stained by fraternal blood and by crimes against the Motherland and the Revolution

are to be arrested." The telegram ended with an appeal to rally round the Government and the organs of Democracy, for the sake of security "against the foreign foe and his allies in our own camps" (21st July).

This sounded all the more impressive as it came from the head of the Government. Kerensky undertook to form a new Cabinet, and the Soviet Executive Committee promised him its unlimited support. A somewhat complicated and verbose appeal, issued in regard to this, ended as follows: "Revolutionary discipline must encase the country like strong armour. The Government will, as one man, begin the struggle against the counter-revolution, and for the organisation of revolutionary order."

Another appeal made by the Soviet declared: "The insane attempt (of the Bolsheviks) has caused a great reaction among the masses, causing a tendency to panic which may issue in a counter-revolution."

The anxieties in connection with the struggle against this counter-revolution (which was indeed threatening not from the Right, but the Left) quite hid from the members of the Soviet even the possibility of any military danger.

In the meantime, Petrograd had learnt of the shameful behaviour of the troops at the front, resulting in the Germans breaking the Russian line. An official communique of the 21st July even stated the reasons of this disaster, saying that "the 607th Regiment left the trenches of its own accord and retired, in consequence of which neighbouring troops likewise retreated, thereby enabling the enemy to develop his successes. Our defeat was due to the now inveterate habit of discussion by the troops in place of obedience, so that elements who did advance were left unsupported, and

in some cases positions were abandoned when no enemy pressure was felt."

Every day the newspapers gave further particulars. It was clear that the ruin of the army was an accomplished fact, the ruin which had been feared by patriots from the first days of the Revolution, and against which the public had been warned by every military authority.

On the 23rd July the telegram of the Commissaries of the XI. Army was received. This was the first terrible, public acknowledgement of the state of dissolution in the army. It was issued, not by the Cadets, not by any Generals, but by representatives of the Revolutionary Democracy, and the impression was therefore all the greater.

The German advance against the XI. Army, which began on the 6th July, is becoming calamitous, and is even threatening to ruin Revolutionary Russia. There is an abrupt and perilous change in the spirit of the troops, lately advancing by the heroic efforts of the thoughtful minority. The will to advance has rapidly evaporated, the majority of the regiments are in a state of increasing dissolution, there is no authority or subordination whatever, persuasion and protests have lost their force, and those who make them are threatened and sometimes shot. There have been cases when the order to advance at once to the rescue has been discussed for hours at meetings, with the result that the reserves have been twenty-four hours late in arriving. Not infrequently the troops abandoned their trenches after the first shots of the enemy. Hundreds of versts to the rear streams of fugitives may be seen, with rifles or without, healthy, fit, lost to all shame, feeling themselves quite immune from all punishment. Sometimes whole regiments retreat in this manner. The members of the Army and Front Committees and Commissaries are unanimous in acknowledging the necessity for extreme measures. . . . To-day the Commander-in-Chief of the XI. Army, with the consent of the Commissaries and Committees, has given orders to fire on the fugitives. Let the whole country know the truth about what has taken place, let it shudder and

find the courage to fall ruthlessly on all those who are ruining Russia by their faint-heartedness, and are betraying their country and the Revolution."

The Germans were driving back the Russian Army. It became necessary to evacuate Galicia in haste, to leave districts once taken at a great cost. The retreat was accompanied by rioting and crime. And on all sides demands were heard for the re-introduction of capital punishment in the army, as the only means of restoring weakened discipline, of stopping the final decay of the army. The Commander-in-Chief of the south-western front, General Korniloff, wired demanding the restoration of discipline and of capital punishment:

I, General Korniloff, who have given all my life for my country, declare that our Motherland is perishing. An army of ignorant men who have lost their senses, unprotected by authority from systematic corruption and dissolution, lost to all feelings of manly dignity, is in full flight. On fields which cannot even be called fields of battle there is a reign of horror, disgrace, and shame, such as the Russian Army has not known since its formation. . . . The mild measures of the Government have weakened all discipline. . . . Death from the hands of our own brethren is always hovering over the army. . . . Capital punishment will save many innocent lives at the cost of those of a few traitors, betrayers, and cowards.

Even then General Korniloff was accused of counter-revolutionary tendencies, but his views were shared by the Commissary of the south-western front, the well-known revolutionary, Boris Savinkoff.

An able writer, who for many years was the chief leader of the militant Social-Revolutionaries, the terrorist who in Tsarist times had organised the assassination of Ministers and of the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovitch, Savinkoff was clothed in all the panoply of revolutionary authority, and the Soviet

found it more difficult to dispose of him than of General Korniloff. Two days after the first telegram telling of the dissolution of the XI. Army, Savinkoff telegraphed that the VII. Army, which had been prepared to take the offensive, was also running away.

The heroes that have fallen in battle inspired the army to fight valiantly, but now that they are dead, the army is running away. How shall I answer for the bloodshed if I do not insist that with an iron resolution such order and discipline shall be immediately introduced into the army as will prevent the cowardly and faint-hearted making a breach in the front. Men who of their own accord abandon their trenches bring ruin on whole regiments and on their comrades who are faithfully doing their duty, and these deserters cover both the Revolution and Russia with eternal disgrace. There is no choice: the death penalty for those who refuse to risk their lives for their country, for land and liberty.

But the reality was even more terrible. The Russian soldiers, who had lately been so self-sacrificing and heroic in doing their duty, now seemed to be possessed by devils, and turned into a mob of cowards and criminals. Even Savinkoff had not the courage to tell all that took place during the retreat. Only about a month after, when fresh news was daily brought of the shameful behaviour of the soldiers, and when the Revolutionary Democracy listened, sighed, and carried on endless discussions about the advisability of introducing capital punishment, Savinkoff's mother published an account of a conversation she had had with her son. She had trembled so often for his life during the Tsar's reign; she herself had sympathised with and assisted her son's revolutionary activity, and she was always against capital punishment, and was convinced that her son shared her views. But he told her the frightful story of a small town called Kalush, where the

retreating Russian Army yielded to its most brutal instincts.

> My heart sank with horror at the tale, when I heard how publicly, in the sight of everybody, in the very street, a savage horde amused itself by violating young and old; when, one after another, in an uninterrupted stream, these savages gratified their brutal instincts on what was already the corpse of a child, and with laughter and yells pointed to the mother, lying in hysterical convulsions near the spot; . . . when at one blow they struck off the head of every one who dared to protest; when they sent treacherous bullets into the backs not of their enemies, but of their own heroes; when, wildly hooting, whistling shrilly, they lifted up on their bayonets the commander who had attempted to stop their shameful flight . . . then I understood . . . I understood! And how easy it seemed to me, after all these refined executions, was death by shooting. (See the *Rech*, August 9, 1917.)

This nightmare then seemed incredible. Since then every day of Russian life has accustomed us to the terrible, has shown what a mob may turn into when deprived of discipline and drunk with unlimited liberty. In the summer of 1917 the papers began to be filled with stories of robberies, oppression, murders, crimes, both wholesale and individual. Not infrequently they were committed under the pretext of land confiscation, the struggle against capitalism, settlement of accounts with the *bourgeoisie* and the counter-revolutionaries. But, by whatever name it went, it was wicked oppression. These were all forerunners of that bloody whirlwind which was to break over Russia, when the triumphant Bolsheviks began to inaugurate the reign of Marxism and Communism.

Of course, neither Prince Lvoff's nor Kerensky's Government encouraged oppression, by whomsoever committed. They tried to bring the masses to their senses. But only by words, and not by deeds. The

most terrible occurrences, the most disgraceful corruption of the army, and the most shameless dissolution of the Russian State could not tear away these peculiar rulers from academic dogmatism, nor bring them into the path of an actual fight for the right, for order, for the safety of Russia.

During the first eight months, individuals, the crowd, and whole organisations grew accustomed to commit those pogroms, insults, oppression, and crimes, which would subsequently be signed by the Soviet authorities in the form of decrees.

Sometimes it seemed as if that cry of " I understand! I understand! " which burst from Mme. Savinkoff would burst likewise from the Government—from the Soviet.

When Kerensky was informed that the committee of the south-western front had decided to shoot those who ran away, he approved of that " truly revolutionary decision." But later on, in the heat of the dispute about capital punishment, when all the commanders, all sensible people, cried out that capital punishment was necessary, that without it the army could not be saved, the same Kerensky solemnly declared that he had never as yet signed a single death sentence.

The hesitation and indecision of the Government only increased the ferment in the army. The best soldiers and officers paid for this weakness. Korniloff was right when, in the summer of 1917, he said that it was necessary to execute the few in order to save the rest who had not lost all conception of honour. The sense of duty, not infrequently attaining the heights of heroism, was at that time still alive in the Russian Army. In battle officers went ahead, but often soldiers followed them. And among them, mingling with the heroes, the traitors carried on their base traffic, un-

punished and unashamed, overwhelming the simple-minded soldiers with a hail of incomprehensible words, thereby unloosing the hands of scoundrels and cowards. Truly terrible was the position of honest soldiers of all ranks, from General to private, when they saw how the orderly military organisation, in which every one knew his place, was turning into a disorderly mob, no longer bound together by the old discipline, and as yet not united by any new moral demands.

In private letters from the front (which are always characteristic of the mood of the army), a real cry of despair is becoming more and more insistent. Here, for instance, is a letter written before the July (1917) Bolshevist mutiny, by a twenty-four-year-old officer who had thrown up the university at the outbreak of the war and volunteered as a private to fight the Germans, had taken part in many a hard battle, and had received several military decorations. He writes:

> In spite of all the difficulty of creating anything at present, I still think that we shall be able to establish some sort of order. It is very hard at present. At times it seems as if we could manage it, but then again despair overcomes us. The cause of all the trouble is the awful ignorance of the soldiers; they are rough and unusually tactful by turns. Everything must be looked on as an excess. . . . But it is awfully hard to lead these men to battle, intoxicated as they are with some kind of liberty, and thinking so little of fighting.

Still more disheartening is the letter of another officer who, before the war, had been a schoolmaster at a factory and in close touch with the workmen. During the first days of the Revolution he enjoyed the happiness of freedom, together with the soldiers. Then irresponsible agitators descended upon them, and began to egg on the soldiers to undermine their confidence in their officers.

The only comfort now is that they look upon even Kerensky as a venal bourgeois, a reactionary and imperialist. Now I can feel no uplifting of spirit. I go forward with clenched teeth, with all my might trying to stifle the feeling of hopelessness which has overwhelmed me. But don't be anxious about me. Lacking faith and an uplifting of spirit, there is yet a feeling of duty, and I shall have strength enough to do it.

The same pessimism in regard to the events at the front is seen in letters of doctors and nurses who were living the same life as the army and saw all that was going on.

Their position was as difficult as that of all educated people. The committees, elected by an absurd suffrage system, encouraged by a blind and irresponsible demagogic revolutionary democracy, were completely upsetting the work of the medical and sanitary organisations. Illiterate orderlies conducted the elections, distributed the duties among the doctors, insulted the nurses, discharged them, upset the patients, who, before consenting to be operated upon, would call a meeting of the committee of lower employees and ask for their competent opinion as to whether it was necessary to amputate a gangrened leg or not.

The doctors and nurses bore all this. They could not throw up their work, nor leave the sick and wounded entrusted to their care. With clenched teeth, under a hail of insult and humiliation, like the Russian officers they went on doing their duty. Their bitterness was increased by seeing the soldiers turning into a mob of "revolted slaves" (one of Kerensky's most apt expressions).

In my ward I have some wounded of the mutinied regiments. They have already managed to fraternise with our orderlies, on the basis of common ideals, namely, to take care of their own skins, and not to bother about either their comrades or their

country. One feels quite powerless before such an obstinate and stupid gang, deaf to all ideas of duty and truth.

The above was written in the middle of July by a young nurse, who had worked at the front since the beginning of the war. I had seen her at work, I had seen how cheerfully and devotedly she worked for the Russian Army, bringing brightness and cheerfulness into the hard conditions of life at the front by her generous and superabundant youth. But now this energetic, self-sacrificing, merry girl was absolutely disheartened.

And how could she help losing heart? The nurses of the Northern front who had come to the Congress at Minsk asked the soldiers:

"Our faith is shattered, and a bitter question arises: Whom are we serving? Those who are going forth to die for their country, or those who are sowing anarchy and killing the champions of a brighter future?"

Many others asked themselves similar bitter questions. Later on, in consequence of the Bolshevist *coup d'état*, Russia was fated to drink the cup to the dregs, to know what a destructive force the army of many millions might become after throwing off the last vestiges of authority.

Military men had already foreseen this, and had made every effort to stop the process of decay. The Commander-in-Chief, Korniloff, prohibited meetings within the zone of military operations, but could not prevent whole car-loads of the *Pravda* and other Bolshevist literature arriving at the front. The civilians at the head of the Soviet and the Government did not believe the Generals. The secession of the Ukraine, the evacuation of Galicia, and the gangrene in the army, the insurrection of the Bolsheviks, which had revealed

their connection with Germany—all this was not enough to remove the scales from the eyes of the Revolutionary Democracy, to make it understand where the storm came from. Its relations with the Bolsheviks were as friendly as heretofore. After the first few days of panic, when the Socialistic Press reproached the followers of Lenin for having "plunged a dagger into the back of the Revolution," it again turned all its attention to the foes on the Right.

"After having skimmed the cream from the pseudo-revolutionary movement let loose by the Bolsheviks, the counter-revolutionaries are hastening to take the necessary repressive measures for their own purposes" says the *Izvestia* for 26th July.

We find the same note in the *Novaia Zhizn*, the paper of the influential Russian writer, Maxim Gorky, which, under the guidance of a group of Social-Democratic Internationalists, was very persistent in trying to prove that salvation lay only in the creation of "strong revolutionary power." "No one except the Soviets was able to exert such power." And this power was required—to fight the counter-revolutionaries.

After this, Lenin and Zinovieff of course had the right to publish an "open letter" in order to explain that they had merely disappeared in the name of liberty, and did not wish to give themselves up into the hands of the counter-revolutionaries.

"Only the Constituent Assembly, if it be convened. and convened not by the *bourgeoisie*, will have the right of expressing its views on the order of the Provisional Government for our arrest." These words regarding the jurisdiction of the Constituent Assembly have a peculiar flavour at the present time, when the Bolsheviks have shown what they understand by its rights. Of course, even before this they did not hide their

theoretical contempt for Right and Liberty, and, ever since they existed as a party, have given sufficient practical proofs of the perfect shamelessness of their tactics. But so strong were the ties which bound the other Socialists to the Bolsheviks that it was beyond the power of the Socialist Centre to break them. This was done later by the Bolsheviks themselves. But in the summer of 1917 they did not want an open rupture. Their object was to detach the Soviets from non-Socialistic Russia, so as to be able to carry out the Marxist programme more rapidly, and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But still Revolutionary Democracy was not prepared to attack the *bourgeoisie*. It did not want to drive it away, but merely to force it to adopt the Soviet programme. In regard to this a struggle took place which made it very difficult for Kerensky to form a new Cabinet. Prince Lvoff resigned on the 20th July, explaining in a letter in the papers the reasons for his resignation. He could not accept the programme proposed by the Socialist Ministers and accepted by the Provisional Government. "I cannot agree to it, in view of its being an obvious departure from the non-party idea to that of seeking to attain purely Socialistic, party aims." He saw this, first of all, in the intention of the Government to declare for a republic without waiting for the Constituent Assembly, which ought to determine the form of Government. But the chief difference of opinion between the first Premier of the Provisional Government and the other Ministers was in regard to the land question.

"Though I am an advocate for the transference of the land to the labouring peasantry," says Prince Lvoff, "nevertheless, I think that the Land Bills introduced by the Minister of Agriculture are unacceptable."

At that time the Minister of Agriculture was Victor Chernoff, who was supported by the Social Revolutionary party. His Bill was a true reflection of the programme and ideology of that party in the solution of the land problem. They considered that all the land ought to be taken away from the landowners, without any compensation. Every toiler had a right to the land, but as soon as he ceased to till it with his own hands, the land was to be taken away. Land must not be either bought or sold, and could not be private property, as the land belonged to God. This was the only time the Social Revolutionaries used the name of God. In less poetical language this meant that the land ought to belong to the Government.

These general ideas of agrarian socialism began, with the assistance of V. Chernoff and his comrades, to assume the form of legislative projects. On resigning, Prince Lvoff thus characterised them: "The Ministry of Agriculture is passing laws which undermine the national ideas of right. Not only do these laws fail to combat the tendency to seize property, not only do they fail to bring agricultural relationships into their normal channel, but they justify, as it were, the ruinous arbitrary seizures of land that are going on all over Russia, they confirm the seizures already accomplished, and strive to place before the Constituent Assembly an already determined agrarian question.

"I consider the Land programme of the Minister of Agriculture ruinous to Russia, because it will leave Russia bankrupt, ruined both morally and materially." The ensuing anarchy in the villages to a considerable extent confirmed his opinion, but at the same time any attempts to restrict the peasantry in their seizures of land were considered to be manifestations of the counter-revolutionary tendency, so much feared by Socialists.

When, after the resignation of Prince Lvoff and the Cadets, Kerensky and the Revolutionary Democrats who supported him began to seek for new men and a new platform, at the united meeting of the central democratic organisations on the 29th July, a voluminous motion was passed.[1] "The country and the Revolution are in the greatest danger, owing both to the impending military disaster and to the anarchistic and counter-revolutionary attempts." In putting on the same level the far from equal dangers, the meeting declared that it was necessary to create a firm Government, in which the *bourgeoisie* was to take part. But any agreement between the Revolutionary Democracy and the *bourgeoisie* was only possible if the *bourgeoisie* would "acknowledge all the conquests made by the Revolution," and, above all, would stand up to the end for the formula of "Peace without annexation and indemnities, on the basis of self-determination." The Soviet politicians knew that this formula, drawn up by the Socialistic minority at Zimmerwald, was objected to, not only by the Cadets, but also by their own fellow-Socialists of the type of Plekhanoff. Men of such different opinions as the Cadet Milyukoff, the Social-Democrat Plekhanoff, and the Anarchist Kropotkin, unanimously asserted that peace could only be obtained by victory over the enemy, and not by Soviet negotiations with the international proletariat. Knowing this, and likewise publicly declaring that authority and power should be founded on an agreement with the *bourgeoisie*, the representatives of the Soviet inserted into their resolution the following threat: "The passive opposition shown by certain groups of the *bourgeoisie* to all the revolutionary

[1] As was often the case in Soviet organisations, this meeting was somewhat undefined in character. Besides the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, and the Soviet of Peasants' Delegates, Provincial Delegates of some sort were present.

measures of the Provisional Government, the boycotting of authority, the desire to retard agrarian, political, financial, and economic reforms, and to put off the Constituent Assembly—all this is nothing but an attempt to seize power, by taking advantage of the embarrassed state of the country. Such opposition is equivalent to direct assistance to the darkest forces of counter-revolution, and tends to prepare the way for the complete destruction of the country." Later on the same accusations, couched in a cruder form and leading to more sanguinary results, were brought by the Bolsheviks against all their opponents, including the Revolutionary Democracy whom they had defeated. It is one of the strange features of the Revolution that the accusations of imperialism, bourgeois, and counter-revolutionary tendencies were gradually shifted from the Right to the Left parties. First they were brought against Milyukoff and Lvoff, then against Kerensky and Tsereteli, and finally against the Social-Revolutionaries.

Counter-revolution was likewise spoken of by members of the Government in July 1917. The new Minister of the Interior, Prince Tsereteli, sent circulars all over Russia, saying: "No arbitrary seizures of land and property, no oppression, no incitement to civil war and breaches of military duty are permissible." This would have been all very well, had it not been followed by an explanation regarding the source of all these destructive factors. "The treacherous blow dealt by Anarchy has caused confusion in the country. Hoping to snatch away all that has been obtained by the Revolution, Counter-Revolution has lifted its head. The dissolution and anarchy at the rear have found their way into the army at the front." Prince Tsereteli's words seemed to imply that counter-revolution (which by the way had as yet shown no signs of its existence)

had rotted the army. He does not say a single word about the Bolsheviks. For they were an influential Left group of the Social-Democratic party, whose unity he had lauded and defended.

The Committee of the Duma, with M. Rodzianko at the head, was considered to be the chief hot-bed of counter-revolution. Rodzianko had no influence over the masses, but certain tendencies of State policy found their expression in him. Thus, on the 31st July, when there were endless discussions about the programme of the new Government, the Provisional Committee of the Duma passed a definite motion which began with a quotation from Korniloff's telegram: "An army of ignorant men who have lost their senses, and are not bound by any authority." The national representatives pointed out that "the cause of the general calamity lies in the seizure of Government power by irresponsible organisations, and the creation by them of a divided central authority, accompanied by a subversion of local authority."

In order to save both the army and Russia, it was necessary that authority should be strong. "The Government must not be guided by the orders of party organisations and separate classes of society."

Milyukoff, who spoke at this sitting, pointed out still more clearly that the Government ought not to be dependent on the Soviets, that its policy should be united and national, and not the class policy of Zimmerwald. "We demand," said he, "that measures should be taken to create a strong army by the restoration of strict military discipline, and the resolute prevention of any interference on the part of Army Committees in questions of military tactics and strategy."

This was a programme directly contrary to that of Revolutionary Democracy, who wanted both to establish

civil government and to organise the army exclusively on the basis of elected committees and organisations.

Given such a difference of opinion, it was no easy task for Kerensky, while seeking support from the Revolutionary Democracy, to form a Coalition Government. For three weeks Russia was practically without any properly organised central authority. However, the force of its former state inertia was sufficiently great to keep the whole machinery still at work. Notwithstanding the weakness and contradictions which brought discord into the governing parties, the people as a whole were ready to obey and waited patiently, even longed for new laws to be passed, just as the army longed for strict, uniform, and sensible orders. The expectations of the people were not justified. The new Government, finally formed on the 6th August, turned out to be as helpless as its predecessor.

It included the Social-Revolutionaries Kerensky, Savinkoff, Lebedeff, Arksentieff, Chernoff; the Social-Democrats Skobeleff, Nikitin, and Prokopovich; the Socialist-Populist Peshekhonoff; the Cadets Kokoshkin, Oldenburg, Yurieneff, Kartashoff; the Radical Efremoff, and three Independents, Zarudny, Tereshchenko, and Nekrasoff. This was the so-called "Save the Revolution" Government.

As in all Cabinets, among the new Ministers there were both strong and weak men, able men and those whose capacity was limited. But not one was strong enough to guide the Russian vessel of State from anarchy to order, nor able enough to pull the Government out of the mire of dogmatism and inaction.

Partly owing to pressure brought to bear by the Soviet circles, who still regarded the Bolsheviks as their comrades, and partly owing to its own inner weakness and heterogeneous composition, the new

Cabinet was not even able to wage serious warfare with that part of the Social-Democratic party whom the Public Prosecutor had accused of high treason. Some of the minor Bolsheviks who had received money from the Germans were indeed arrested. But Trotsky and Lenin remained at large, drove about to the various barracks and meetings, and made incendiary speeches against the Allies, against the War, against the *bourgeoisie*. Finally, on the 5th August, they were arrested. And at once in the Petrograd City Council, where all political perturbations and passions were reflected, the Internationalists, the closest friends of the Bolsheviks, put a question as to the causes of the arrests. The City Council, two-thirds of whom were Socialists and one-third Cadets, supported the question, or rather the protest against the arrest of men who had opposed the Provisional Government with arms in their hands.

At a Congress of Bolsheviks (8th August) it was announced that Lenin and Zinovieff, for whose arrest orders had been given, were hiding somewhere in Russia, and were in constant touch with their party. Although the Public Prosecutor had accused them of high treason, no measures whatever were taken for their arrest. Another Bolshevik, Kameneff-Rosenfeldt, came straight from prison to a meeting of the Central Executive Committee, where he met with an ovation. Several days after the *Izvestia* published a statement that this revolutionary hero used to receive 100 roubles a month from the Tsar's police for his work as an "agent provocateur." But even after this he still remained a member of the Executive Committee. At the same meeting where the Revolutionary Democracy greeted the Bolshevist secret police agent so enthusiastically, members of the Government rose to make speeches.

But in their speeches there was no bold condemnation of the Left traitors. On the contrary, the Ministers hastened to point out to the Soviet that the principal foes were of course among the Right parties. Prince Tsereteli spoke of the *bourgeoisie* having gone over to the counter-revolutionaries, while Kerensky declared pathetically that he would allow no Restoration. These words were already an echo of the conflict which had taken place between the head of the Government and experienced army leaders.

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE MOSCOW STATE CONFERENCE

Attempts of the Government find supporters outside the Soviets—The Generals and the Committees at the front—Rodzianko's declaration and Chheidze's declaration—Two Russias—Kerensky's ambiguous position—Difficulty of amalgamation — The Bolsheviks and the Moscow workmen.

THE position of the Premier of the "Save the Revolution" Government was exceedingly difficult, first of all because in the Russian Revolution, as probably in all others, the revolutionaries themselves turned out to be the worst friends of liberty and order.

Their watchword was: "Save what the Revolution has won!" But besides the Revolution there was Russia also expecting a deliverer. In a country with a population of 175 millions, anarchy and famine reigned far and wide; the war had taken a firmer grip than ever. The Government had to fight against these three calamities. But how was that to be done, when the Government instead of being supported by powerful political organisations with a proper conception of State affairs was merely trying to find supporters among masses as unstable as molten lava?

Any other supporters were considered by Kerensky and his colleagues to be not democratic enough. Kerensky's popularity was very great both in the army and at the rear. When the municipal elections were

taking place under the new universal suffrage law, the success of the Social-Revolutionaries was increased by the fact that Kerensky belonged to that party. In almost every town his comrades were in the majority. But the voters did not really know for whom they were voting, as the Social-Revolutionary party consisted of many sections sharply distinct from one another. The Left were nearer to the Bolsheviks, and afterwards supported them. The Right were nearer to the Socialist-Populists of the Plekhanoff and Potressoff type. The Right Social-Revolutionaries supported Kerensky. Among them there were able and honest individuals like Lebedeff, Mme. Breshko-Breshkovskaia, Savinkoff, and others. The numerous Social-Revolutionary Centre, where Chernoff was especially influential, were all against Kerensky.

Chernoff, a writer of influence in Socialistic circles, an ideologist of the so-called "Revolutionary Populist group," had been a political refugee for ten years. In October 1915, together with other Social-Revolutionaries, he founded (in Geneva) the "Committee of Intellectual Assistance to Russian Prisoners of War in Germany," which published a pacificist journal called *Away from Home*. The Germans and Austrians assiduously disseminated this periodical among Russian prisoners in the camps. In many ways the general ideas voiced by this journal coincided with those of the Bolsheviks.

This man, who had taken part in the Zimmerwald Congress, was appointed by the Social-Revolutionaries to the post of Minister of Agriculture. In the Cabinet, as in the party, Chernoff carried on a struggle against Kerensky. This also was not conducive to the establishment of the firm Government which was so much spoken of both on the Right and on the Left. But

the Left considered it should be based on the will of the people, as expressed by the spontaneously established Soviets and democratic organisations, whereas the Right wanted to retain the uninterrupted succession of authority in the form of an independent Provisional Government, which could hand over its powers only to a Constituent Assembly properly elected by universal suffrage. This Right tendency had the support of the Fourth Duma. But the Duma was attacked furiously on all sides by the Revolutionary Democracy, beginning with Chheidze, President of the Soviet, who, like Kerensky, was afraid to avail himself of its support because he did not wish to risk his popularity among the Democracy.

The suffrage law under which the Duma had been elected was exceedingly incomplete, and even under the old régime was often severely criticised by the members of the Duma themselves, especially those of the Cadet party. But still it was a lawful assembly of national representatives, a parliament which all through the war had taken the national and patriotic point of view and had established a party truce for the sake of saving the country. It was only the extreme Left, led by Chheidze and Kerensky, that spoke against such a policy of union for the defence of the country. From the very first days of the war these men spoke in the Duma—not of victory over the Germans but of the liquidation of the war. It is therefore easy to understand that the Soviet, where Chheidze was President, persistently discredited the Duma Committee, insisted on its being closed, and tried to assume the rôle of a parliament. But the method of recruiting the Soviet was too haphazard and illegal, and its activity was purely that of a political meeting. Practically even in the first Soviet the influence of the mob was of enormous

importance. Even the Socialist Ministers began to understand the lack of statesmanship in their Soviet colleagues, and pending the election of the Constituent Assembly tried to find some substitute for representation. Notwithstanding solemn promises of support, they—and especially Kerensky—were met with increasing coolness in the Soviet.

For three months, from August to November, Kerensky made various attempts to establish a consultative institution of more authority than the Soviet. On the 3rd August, before the final formation of the Cabinet, Kerensky hastily convened, in the Winter Palace, representatives of the executive committees of all the parties. After an excited and feverish all-night sitting, the meeting entrusted the formation of a Cabinet to Kerensky. A more serious representative State Conference was convened in Moscow on the 25th August. A month later, on 29th September, a democratic Congress met in Petrograd, only Socialists being admitted. Finally, on the 20th October a fourth and last attempt was made, and a Council of the Republic was convened, but was dispersed by the Bolsheviks. After that the latter were masters of the position.

Invitations to the State Conference in Moscow [1] were sent to the representatives of all classes, of all parties, organisations, and corporations. About 2500 representatives came to the Conference. There is no exaggeration in saying that the flower of the Russian population were gathered together in the enormous hall of the Great Theatre on the 25th of August. Professors and workmen, military men and members of co-operative

[1] The shorthand reports and other materials of the Conference apparently perished during the bombardment of the Moscow Town Hall by the Bolsheviks in November 1917. I am writing about the Conference partly from newspaper reports, and partly from personal notes and impressions. I was a member of the Conference, as a delegate of the Petrograd City Council.

societies, of Zemstvos and municipal corporations, scientists, writers, peasants from the Peasants' Union, generals and privates, monarchists and republicans—all had responded to the call of the Government. It was a review of the living forces of the country, where the two Russias were to be reconciled. What was then termed the Right wing, which included all non-Socialists, was called "property-qualified Russia," although there were not a few proletarians of the educated classes among them. The Left wing, which styled itself democratic Russia, included not only workmen but even titled persons and rich men.

This arbitrarily given nickname even then included two distinctly divergent groups. The Right group was composed of people who acknowledged political liberty and a democratic state as essential to a new Russia. But they considered that it could be founded only on personal initiative and private property. The Left group were Socialists, who considered property to be an institution of the *bourgeoisie* and one to be abolished as soon as possible.

By this time so great was the divergence of views on the methods to be followed and the objects to be attained that, although the invitations had been issued by Kerensky, to whom the Soviet had promised full support, yet the Executive Committee had a long discussion as to whether it could with any propriety take part in the State Conference. The Bolsheviks argued hotly against it, considering the whole affair to be counter-revolutionary. And even the Soviet was afraid of compromising itself, as from information received by the Soviet "dark forces wanted to use the Conference for the purpose of striking a decisive blow at the Revolution." By this time the fear of a counter-revolution had become a sort of mental epidemic among

Socialists. It had existed before, but now their alarm was more concrete in character, for they were frightened by the more and more persistent demands of the military commanders, who proposed a series of measures for the purpose of arresting the ruin of the army by the restoration of discipline. Like the civilians the soldiers divided into two groups. The masses were drawn to the Soviets, while the officers and the better educated private soldiers grouped themselves around the Generals headed by Korniloff, who had already in a report to Kerensky expressed his views on the commissaries and the committees.

But both of the latter institutions were considered by Soviet politicians as "triumphs of the Revolution," and any attempt on them—counter-revolution.

Part of Korniloff's report to the Government got into the newspapers. In it the Supreme Commander-in-Chief pointed out that the drafts sent out to him were not only quite worthless for fighting purposes, but were corrupting the troops already at the front. "It is therefore necessary, in cases when soldiers commit crimes in the rear, to have recourse to the same severe measures up to capital punishment, as are in force in the army at the front." This proposal was furiously criticised by the press.

The fears of the Soviet circles unfortunately infected the Government.

Nevertheless, after prolonged debates, the Executive Committee decided to take part in the State Conference, and at this time showed great independence of the Bolsheviks, depriving them of the right to take part in the Conference because of their refusal to submit to the resolutions of the Soviet majority.

But even the absence of the Bolsheviks could not close the rift in the Conference. Only one watchword at

times brought unity into all ranks, and that was when some orator would say: "Russia will not permit the conclusion of a shameful peace." Then equally vigorous and united applause came from Right and Left. But no sooner did the speakers touch on more concrete matters, on the question of how to preserve Russia from a disgraceful peace, or what order was to be introduced in the rear and at the front for this purpose, than the Conference would again divide into two camps.

The Conference was especially sensitive on the question of army organisation. During the debates on this question not only were the words significant but there was significance in the applause, for whom, what reason, and from whom it came. And more than once, either when the Generals were speaking, or when the representatives of the Army Committees were addressing the meeting, the terrible presentiment of civil war surged up threateningly, and all words of conciliation sounded weak and unconvincing.

When Kerensky proposed to greet Korniloff "as the leader of the perishing Russian Army," an enormous majority of those present gave this courageous and honest patriot a hearty ovation.

Only the soldiers smiled carelessly and retained their seats, when the others rose to applaud their leader and chief. And what else could be expected of these uneducated or half-educated men, when those whom they looked upon as their spiritual teachers—the civilian members of the Soviet—also remained sitting?

On the stage, not far from the long table at which the Ministers sat, with Kerensky at their head, stood General Korniloff. With an air calm but careworn, he looked at the Left section, on whose conscientiousness and good sense depended that which was dearer to him than life itself—the fate of Russia. And in the front

row of the stalls below him sat the Georgian Chheidze, who, turning his back on the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, deliberately applauded the representatives of the Front Committees in the boxes on the Left. His example was followed by the other members of the Executive Committee. It was only bourgeois Russia that applauded the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army.

The Soviet showed plainly and significantly its total inability to understand the meaning of any army, and of what its efficiency and discipline must be based on. After such a demonstration all appeals for unity sounded dead and hopeless, and it was in vain that Prince Tsereteli spoke of an honest, democratic coalition. It could not be formed until Democracy had adopted an honest attitude towards the principal problem of the State—the war and the army. The form of government and the establishment of authority, economics, and class warfare—all this did not give rise to such outbreaks of political passion as the army did. Kaledin, Alexeieff, and Korniloff spoke of this decay of the army courageously, not fearing the truth. They demanded the immediate introduction of decisive measures, and not of half-measures.

Kaledin, the Cossack General, thus formulated these necessary measures:

> The Army is to keep outside politics. Meetings must be prohibited at the front. All committees and Soviets must be abolished, both in the Army and in the rear. Only the economic committees may be left in the regimental units. The Soldiers' Declaration of Rights must be amended and supplemented by an indication of his duties. Strict discipline must be restored.

A similar view of the need for efficiency of the army was taken in the declaration made by the members of the Fourth Duma, read by Rodzianko. This declaration was the best exposition of the political ideas and desires

of the so-called bourgeois Russia, as represented at the Congress. These were as follows :

> At the present moment the chief object is to save Russia from defeat, dismemberment, and disgrace, and so to carry on the World War to a victorious end, in complete accord with our Allies, as to guarantee mankind against a repetition of such a war in the future.

The declaration begins with this. History has already shown that the Russian politicians who grouped themselves round the Duma were quite correct in their statement of what was required at that time. But power was not on their side and their exhortations fell on heedless ears.

Of course such aims demanded order and discipline in the army, as was pointed out in the above declaration. But in carrying on the war "the Government, in defining the aims of the war waged by Russia and the Allies, must not introduce any tendencies of international Socialism, but must be guided exclusively by the national interests of Russia. The Government must preserve a complete independence as regards motions passed by the international Socialistic conference. It must likewise keep itself completely independent of the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates organisations which do not represent the opinions and will of the entire nation."

The Fourth Duma in its declaration urged that the Russian Government should be independent of any party. The Government must be one and undivided, and no organisations have any right to interfere in its orders. But neither must the Government anticipate in any fundamental measures the decisions of the Constituent Assembly, especially such measures as would affect the unity of the Russian State. The declaration especially emphasised the necessity for the Government to

"prevent all the attempts to aggravate Social conditions, and foment class warfare now encouraged by certain Socialistic parties. The Government must likewise prohibit any arbitrary solution of Social questions by interested parties." This refers to the seizure of land by the peasants and of factories by the workmen.

The Right half of the State Conference did not come to any formal agreement, though individual speakers expressed full concurrence with this declaration of the Fourth Duma. The majority of the Right orators merely developed its fundamental principles. Shulgin (Nationalist) and Maklakoff (Cadet) were especially clear in their exposition. The Cadets had taken an active part in drawing up the declaration, and, if I am not mistaken, it was written by Milyukoff, who, in his speech, again emphasised still more clearly all the danger of capitulating to the Utopian claims of the working classes, and to the extreme demands of the nationalities composing the Empire.

Maklakoff, while welcoming that part of the Government programme which promised to carry on the war until the conclusion of an honourable peace, said: "But I cannot help drawing attention to the alarm felt by the public conscience, when it sees among the 'Save the Revolution' Government some of yesterday's 'defeatists.'"

These words caused the Left wing to cheer Chernoff lustily, as if for the purpose of letting every one know which of the Ministers was "yesterday's defeatist," and there were cries from the Left: "Long live the Muzhik Minister Chernoff!"

But Maklakoff was listened to in gloomy, inimical silence when he spoke of the necessity of saving Russia, and not the Revolution, when he said that the way to salvation lay through the army, and that therefore "it

is our revolutionary duty to restore discipline in the army." Now Chheidze in his speech had explained that the aim of commissaries and committees was "to be conductors of revolutionary policy. Therefore," said Maklakoff, "it was not considerations of discipline, not military necessity, but the desire to have their own agents in the army that made the Revolutionary Democracy stand up for these institutions. Those who introduced them into the army hoped that they would manage to do without battles, that Zimmerwald would lead them to an honourable peace. And the war still went on. Zimmerwald proved a poor defence against the advancing foe. A choice must be made. The army must either take to politics or else obey its leaders. But to restore discipline in the army would mean giving it into the power of the officers to whom at present the Government shows no trust." Maklakoff prophetically warned the Government that in choosing the middle way it was creating such a state of affairs that "the army will not be a fighting army, and will not belong to the Government."

In November Kerensky himself experienced all the hard truth of this prophecy. What was said by Rodzianko, Guchkoff, Alexeieff, Korniloff, Milyukoff, Riabushinsky, Kutler, Shulgin, and many others who stood out for a strong Government and a strong army, in many points coincided with the task the Government had before it: "To save the State, to protect the honour and dignity of the Russian people," as Kerensky put it. In his speeches too there was a ring of patriotism, far nearer to the feelings of the Right wing than to those of the Left. Nevertheless the Socialist majority in the Cabinet more than counteracted this tendency of their chief. They spoke of the salvation of Russia, of the necessity of saving it from defeat by the Germans,

and yet put their trust, not in the patriots Alexeieff and Korniloff, but in the "defeatists" Chheidze and Chernoff. It was obvious what the result would be.

Radzianko could not even read his Duma declaration. It was only printed in the newspapers. When his turn to speak came the time allowed each speaker had already been curtailed, and Kerensky either was not able or did not wish to let the most prominent representative of property-owning Russia have his say—the most prominent representative if not by his personal qualities at least by the position he occupied. It was one of those chance occurrences to which history likes to give a symbolic meaning. Non-Socialistic Russia, defending the interests not of a class but of the State, was left unheard all through the State Conference. And Chheidze, speaking for Socialistic Russia, was able not only to finish his speech, but even to read the whole of a long manifesto of the Revolutionary Democracy. This declaration was signed not only by the Central Committee of the Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates, but also by the Railway, Post and Telegraph, and Teachers' Unions, by the Front organisations, by part of the representatives of the Zemstvo and municipal institutions, the Food Committees, etc. As there was no voting at the Conference it is very difficult to determine the numerical ratio between the non-Socialist and Socialist parties. But there is no doubt that the number of people on the side of the democratic organisations, in whose name Chheidze spoke, was enormously greater than that of the people who, speaking generally, supported Rodzianko. The Left were correct in saying that they had the masses with them. Numerically they were stronger. But the bulk of the intellectual forces was not on their side. The Left had to acknowledge this. Mme. Breshko-Breshkovskaia, justly named

the "Grandmother of the Revolution," said, turning to the benches occupied by the present or former members of the Duma: "You who, more than others, are rich in talent, knowledge, and experience in statesmanship—go to the people, use your spiritual wealth in their service."

But the Left would not or could not understand that intellectual power used to carry out alien ideas ceases to be a power. And the ideas of the Right and the Left wing of the Conference in regard to State matters were almost diametrically opposed.

It is true Chheidze's declaration (subsequently known as the Declaration of the 27th of August) constituted a withdrawal from the old position held by the Revolutionary Democracy. In the spring of 1917 the Socialist Ministers promised on entering the Cabinet to intensify class warfare. The Declaration announced: "The Revolutionary Democracy, as represented by its Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates, is striving in everything to place the interests of the whole of the country and the Revolution above those of separate classes and groups of the population." This was already a great advance. But it could be of no significance unless the Soviets drew practical conclusions from it in fundamental questions of government and the war and in social and national problems. On none of these points, however, could they leave their former positions. The word "victory" was still not to be found in their vocabulary, the spirit of Zimmerwald still determined their relations to the war.

"The Government must bear in mind that the energetic continuation of a foreign policy embracing a refusal of all imperialistic aims (at that time the Germans had occupied an enormous tract of Western Russia) and the desire for the speedy conclusion of universal peace on

democratic principles, will be a mighty weapon for increasing the efficiency of the army.[1] The Government must act with the support of democratic organisations in the rear and at the front. It must demand that the military authorities shall be unconditionally obedient to it, as the representative of the supreme power of the State." But there was not a word about democratic organisations also being obliged to obey this authority. Thus double authority was, so to speak, decreed by this declaration. The declaration very justly points out that the proprietary and privileged classes must sacrifice their interests for the good of the country. But it most inaccurately asserts that "democracy is prepared to make any sacrifices to save the country and the Revolution." The misfortunes of the country and the Revolution arose from the fact that no one knew how to inspire the masses with a readiness to make sacrifices or even to submit to discipline.

The declaration proceeded to set forth a long economic, agrarian, and financial programme. Perhaps the most important points in it were the demand that agricultural land should be handed over to land committees " without any infringement of the present form of land tenure." How land can be taken away from private owners without infringing these forms of land tenure does not appear ? The Soviet lawyers themselves would perhaps not be able to answer this.

As regards commerce and industry, there are clauses in the declaration which actually clear the way for the subsequent work of the Bolsheviks, such as : " In order to increase productivity it is first of all necessary to establish control over production and an active share

[1] This was well answered by a Socialist, a representative of the Officers' Union, Lieutenant-Colonel Wrzosiek : " Try to grasp the psychology of a soldier. You tell him to fight, and point to Stockholm, and promise him that peace will come from there. How can a soldier fight with his soul so divided ? "

in the management of undertakings, even going so far as the formation of syndicates and trusts by the State, and the introduction of monopolies."

The food trade must also be "under the especially strict supervision of food control institutions."[1]

No less dangerous was the war programme of the Revolutionary Democracy based on the support of the committees, who were to be the leaders of the social and political life of the soldiery, while the Commissaries were to "carry on a propaganda of the revolutionary policy of the Government." The commanders were to be "completely independent in all military operations," but they were not to undertake extraordinary measures of "revolutionary action" without the Commissaries. "The extravagant use or abuse of the system of coercion and repression ruins the fighting spirit and efficiency of the army. Therefore discipline must not be restored by the sole authority of the commanding officers."

Even after flight *en masse*, crimes, and desertions, which had become so common in the army, the democracy was afraid of repression as ruinous to the fighting spirit. It was clear that neither patriots nor Generals could take this point of view, that no compromise was possible, and that, sooner or later, the Government would have to make a definite choice between two divergent courses. Unfortunately for Russia, when the fateful hour arrived, the Government, in the person of Kerensky, made the choice that was ruinous to Russia.

But in August at the Moscow State Conference Kerensky was still seeking for what he thought was a central position uniting both camps. He was neither

[1] Even then this control had reached such a stage that private initiative was almost killed. But the new institutions were hastily formed, and staffed by persons who were more noted for their revolutionary tendencies than for their experience—young men who were quite incapable of managing their work, the more so as there was no strong Government.

able nor steadfast enough for this hard task. In his speeches, especially in his perorations, with hysterical nervousness he would threaten Right and Left, call for sacrifices and talk of the perilous position of Russia. Yet when dealing with concrete problems, with the organisation of Government and of the army in the struggle against anarchy and economic ruin, he hesitated, made many a slip, and could not see his way. That part of Kerensky's speech which dealt with the army was positively dangerous. "The old army was, unfortunately, bound by the hateful fetters of mechanical coercion and the senseless subordination of man to iron, and often to a brainless will placed above him."

Thus spoke the Premier, who had retained the post of Minister of War, in the presence of the representatives of those very Army Committees which for five months had done nothing but throw off the chains of all coercion and all subordination.

But what was still more dangerous was that in his speech Kerensky divided the officers into two classes. To one he took off his hat: "The ordinary fighting officers who were not trying to make a career." These had on their side the whole intelligent portion of the army, including those new Army Committees and representatives of the central revolutionary authorities who formed such a necessary and integral part of the army, *i.e.* the Commissaries! In the other class, disapproved of by the Premier, were those officers who considered the committees and Commissaries harmful (*i.e.* practically all the independent officers who were not seeking for cheap demagogic popularity), with the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, General Korniloff, at their head.

The disapproval hinted at by Kerensky was at once understood by the soldiers present and by their civilian leaders. It widened the rift between the officers and

soldiers, and made the desperate position of the officers still worse.

One thing can be placed to the credit of Kerensky and his colleagues in the Cabinet, in connection with the Moscow Conference, and that is that they were not afraid of the truth, and used the Conference to show Russia the dangerous position she was in. Disorder, ruin, anarchy, which later, under the Bolshevist régime, acquired a complete and obvious character, existed practically even then. "I should like to find new, not human words, in order to describe to you all the horror which overwhelms us, when we see this danger. . . . The State is in mortal danger. . . . All of us are in mortal fear,"—Kerensky kept repeating in his speech. The Ministers of the Interior, of Finance, of Commerce, and especially the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, who all spoke after him, brought a series of ruthless and terrible proofs that Russia was on the brink of utter ruin.

"The sole task that the Government has before it is to save the country, to protect the honour and dignity of the whole Russian people and the Russian State," said the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government. It would seem as if all who were present, without distinction of party or class, must unite in one common impulse, and come to the aid of the Government. There is no doubt that sincere pain and alarm for their perishing country were heard in the speeches of even the Socialist orators, who had lately considered patriotism as treachery to the Workmen's International. They likewise felt the sobering influence, but the process was too slow, far slower than was required by the complex and perturbed condition of an enormous nation. For it was not only the workmen, peasants, and soldiers whose minds were disturbed by the struggle between excited class appetites and the gnawing of their civic conscience.

The minds of the leaders were likewise divided between the ingrained dogmas of their international and class catechism and the anxiety for what was, after all, their own native Russia. And perhaps, in his weakness of will and logic, the most tragic incarnation of this duality was Kerensky, the chief and the nominee of the Democracy. First he would call for sacrifices, for a non-party spirit, for unity, then he would threaten: "I will put a limit to the tendency to use the great calamity of Russia as a weapon against the interests of the nation as a whole, and whatever ultimatums may be presented to me, I will manage to subdue them to the supreme authority, and to myself, its supreme head."

As the majority of the members of the State Conference knew that Korniloff was becoming more and more persistent in his demands for the reorganisation of the army, every one understood these hints, and knew that the Premier's threats were directed against the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, and so the hearers, instead of uniting in one general burst of patriotism, as Kerensky himself demanded, were divided between him and Korniloff.

Hesitating between the bitter consciousness of the perilous situation and the obstinate prejudices of the Revolutionary Democracy, Kerensky could not bring the various tendencies of Russian public forces to anything like a united effort. The theatrical handshake which the representative of large industries gave in answer to Tsereteli's appeal to the *bourgeoisie* to make the same sacrifices as labouring democracy hardly deceived any one. All knew that industry was ruined owing to the complete loss of discipline among the workmen, and that if industry could indeed be re-established, it was not by fine speeches, but by strong and wise measures. And, however strange it may be, yet in spite of the Socialistic character of the noisy

Left wing, political passions were aggravated not so much by social disputes, as by differences in the conceptions of victory, discipline, and liberty.

It was in vain that the veterans of the Revolution, Plekhanoff, Mme. Breshko-Breshkovskaia, and Krapotkin, called for good sense and unity.

Plekhanoff, the founder of Russian Social-Democracy, protested against the isolation of the *bourgeoisie*, and tried to convince the proletariat that they should come to an agreement with the other classes, and not fight against them, "as otherwise nothing will be left of Russia, to the great delight of German capitalists."

Krapotkin, the philosopher of Anarchism, at once displeased the Soviet leaders by beginning his speech as follows: "I join with those who have called upon the Russian people to cast loose from Zimmerwaldism once for all, and as one man, to stand up in defence of their country and the Revolution. In my opinion Russia and the Revolution are inseparable. If the Germans defeat us, the consequences of their victory will be so terrible, that even to mention it fills the mind with horror."

In the speeches of the Socialists of such groups Socialistic ideology was united to sober statesmanship and warm patriotism. Their words met with no sympathy in that Left wing which had practically already taken the power into its own hands. For appearance' sake, both speakers were applauded, as former revolutionary workers. Krapotkin was furiously applauded only when he proposed the immediate establishment of a republic.

In spite of the general tension and excitement, the undoubted general desire not only to elucidate the position, but also to find some outlet, in spite of the readiness of many "to lose their own souls, but at least to save their country" (Kerensky's words), the State

Conference, which sat three days (25th–28th August), was to all thoughtful people an additional proof that the Provisional Government, and with it the whole of Russia, was at an "impasse." It was time, not to "deepen" the Revolution, but to check with a firm hand, to demand from the Revolutionary Democracy and the masses excited by it sacrifices in deeds, and not merely in words, to cast loose from Socialistic romanticism, or else to drink the bitter cup of revolutionary experiment to the dregs.

At this Conference it became clear that it was the Soviet, *i.e.* the Socialist Centre, that was driving Russia to choose the second alternative. The Bolsheviks, who were already preparing the draught of hemlock for Russia, were not present at the Conference.

The Socialist Centre was acting independently of the Bolsheviks, even were in conflict with them. But the Bolsheviks, though absent from the Conference, were carrying on a widespread agitation against it among the Moscow proletariat, especially among the town workmen, who threatened to stop the trams and cut off the electric light. The waiters in the refreshment bar of the Opera House where the Conference was held struck on the third day, and it was some other organisation (if I mistake not, the Zemstvo Union) which hastily established a sort of soup kitchen in the theatre.

This ferment in the town among the masses, to whose support the Soviet politicians were always referring, naturally not only kept up their nervousness, but their aggressive attitude towards the proprietary elements of the Conference. Striving to retain their waning popularity, they emphasised their differences both with the *bourgeoisie* and with the extremists. But this did not save their authority, nor did it save the masses from subsequent suffering.

Nevertheless, a small group of Bolsheviks did come forward at the Moscow Conference with a separate declaration, in which it was stated that the Provisional Government " convened the Moscow Conference in order to get new strength for a new campaign against all that had been won by the Revolution. The Moscow Conference is a convenient opportunity for the counter-revolutionary executioners to come to an understanding about the organisation of an All-Russian counter-revolutionary conspiracy. The proletariat will not allow the bourgeois oppressors to triumph. The proletariat will carry on the Revolution to the end, will secure land for the peasants, and peace, bread, and liberty for the people."

History has shown the real meaning of such promises, as it has shown how many real executioners, savage and ruthless, were hidden among the ranks of the Bolsheviks themselves, only waiting for the moment when the people's want of organisation and its trustfulness would enable them to wreak their fury on the unfortunate population of Russia.

# CHAPTER IX

## THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE MASSES

Industrial anarchy [1]—A. Konovaloff's resignation—An appeal to the people's sense of duty—*Désirs* and demands—Intelligentsia and workmen—Class-war propaganda—Municipal elections and the new rulers—The leaders and the crowd.

The Moscow State Conference brought no relief to Russia. It only laid bare the conflict between the High Command of the Army and the Government, and the awful state of the country whose destiny was linked with that of Kerensky's weak and ambiguous Cabinet.

Of course these were only partial ties, for by that time the domination of the masses, dreamed of and proclaimed by the Socialists, became ever more apparent. From the very first days of the Revolution agitators and propagandists of the Left invaded villages, factories, and the army, disseminating the abstract arguments of programmes ratified at Socialistic congresses whose members stood more often than not remote from real life. This propaganda was founded upon two principles: class-war and the transfer of power to the labouring masses, *i.e.* the proletariat, to whom were often added the peasants—a class who in Russia are landowners with a variety of forms of tenure.

[1] A more detailed account of the economic consequences of the Revolution may be found in the book, *Peace Conference and Economic Russia*, by N. Nordman (London).

Russia being essentially an agricultural country, the principal motto became—all land to the people. All liberty to the people was added, but the second part of the sacred formula had far less effect upon the masses.

Even factory workers in Russia had not completely severed their ties with their native village, and now they dreamed of a return to the land promised to them by the new authorities. There was, however, no need for them to hasten back to the country. They were prospering in town. Shortly after the March Revolution an eight-hours' day was summarily introduced in all industries, the workmen refusing to admit either piece-work or a minimum of output. Factories engaged in war-work, municipal works, railway workshops, transport—the whole apparatus of national economics seemed paralysed. The workmen's demands rose to fabulous proportions, while the efficiency of labour steadily declined.

At the same time the latent mistrust of workmen towards their employers and the entire skilled staff, from managers down to engineers and even doctors, was being artificially fostered. The industrial commanding staff was passing through the same humiliations and even the same dangers as the commanding staff of the army.

It could not now be affirmed that all talk of the inefficiency of labour at munition factories, of a terrible decline in the productivity of national labour, were but the "calumnious" attacks of the *bourgeoisie* according to Tsereteli's oft-repeated assertions in the Soviet. When called to the Ministry the Socialists realised the stern truth of the "bourgeois" warnings. How could it be otherwise, when the industrial centres of Moscow and Petrograd, as well as the Donetz coal region—the sole purveyor of fuel for factories, railways, and cities—

were becoming a prey to anarchy, furious, at times bloody, slaying all industrial output?

Long before the enthronement of the Bolsheviks the productivity of mines and factories had been impaired, transport disorganised, the food-supply dislocated. Workmen, unaccustomed to intelligent discipline and lacking strong moral or professional traditions, destroyed all industry with childish blindness.

In vain did the bourgeois and the Right-Socialistic press warn the worker that by ruining industry they in the long run ruined themselves. The Moscow factory owners, members of the Union of Commerce and Industry, presented reports to the Government, pointing out Russia's rapid economic ruin. The same was more than once repeated by engineering and technical unions. The Minister of Commerce and Industry, A. Konovaloff, in his speech at a meeting of factory owners in Moscow, pointed out the dangerous forms assumed by class-war: "If the leaders of the Soviet fail to control the movement and direct it into the channel of legal class struggle, we shall witness a complete paralysis of the country's economic life, and scores of years must elapse before these ruins can be rebuilt." Moscow labour organisations responded to his speech with angry protests and the customary epithet of "bourgeois." A. Konovaloff was indeed a big owner of cotton mills. Able and ambitious, he was alert to realise the claims of the present moment, and not only met the demands of his employees, but often forestalled them. As member of the Duma, he was a leader of the Progressive Party. He entered the Government as a member of the Left, and at first was in close friendship with Kerensky. Much later, towards the autumn of 1917, A. Konovaloff joined the Cadet party. But his leanings to the Left did not protect him from furious attacks on the

part of the Socialistic press, which explained his activity by his "bourgeois origin," although the Minister of Labour, M. Skobeleff, against whom A. Konovaloff was obliged to struggle, was, like the latter, also a millionaire.

All this ended in A. Konovaloff's resigning his post on 2nd June, in spite of all Prince Lvoff's and the other Ministers' attempts to retain him. He was the third Minister to resign from the first Government created by the Revolution. According to the papers, A. Konovaloff proffered very definite motives for his resignation. He did not consider it possible to remain at the post of Minister of Commerce and Industry when industry was being destroyed. A. Konovaloff completely approved of the Government's financial measures, the raising of the income-tax, and the direct taxation of excess profits, etc. He also supported arbitration, collective tariffs, and a whole series of the measures that constituted the minimum programme of the Social-Democratic party. But he disapproved of the proposed system of Government control and regulation of production, considering this a device for getting rid of experienced men and disorganising industry.

According to A. Konovaloff the Government was powerless to re-establish broken discipline owing to its lack of authority. Therefore, he had lost all faith in the Government's work and held that he no longer had any right to participate in it. His step was severely criticised by the Left and by the centre of the Revolutionary Democracy, the Soviet. They considered it an indication of mere bourgeois unwillingness to "deepen the Revolution," a favourite catchword which expressed the ever-growing craving for a general upheaval.

But economics cannot be built upon phraseology, however revolutionary. They take their own implacable course. A month after Konovaloff's resignation the

Minister of Labour, M. Skobeleff, he who at the beginning of his career as a statesman had sent a wireless declaration to the world at large announcing the intention of the Socialist Ministers to deepen class-war, who in one of his first ministerial speeches had promised to place factory owners under a press, now spoke a language entirely different. Using other words, and seasoning his remarks with flattering addresses to the comrades, he was actually compelled to endorse the opinion of his antagonist, the " bourgeois " A. Konovaloff.

In July Skobeleff found himself obliged to issue an appeal to all Russian workmen, beginning with the stern warning : " Workmen, comrades, I appeal to you at a critical period of the Revolution. Industrial output is rapidly declining, the quantity of necessary manufactured articles is diminishing, the peasants are deprived of industrial supplies, we are threatened with fresh food complications and increasing national destitution." He points out further that the revolutionary authority of the Provisional Government " submits national economics to State regulation and control." It has created the Chief Economic Committee, " which must resolutely direct all branches of national economics." However, this Committee can only accomplish its task with the assistance of the workmen themselves. " The success of the struggle against economic devastation depends upon the productivity of labour." During the Tsarist régime the workmen's situation was one of intolerable oppression. The new Government had issued laws providing for stern taxation of large incomes and war-profits. Still the people's money thus garnered ought to be carefully spent.

" The Revolution has swept away the oppression of the police régime, which stifled the labour movement, and the liberated working class is enabled to defend its

economic interests by the mere force of its class solidarity and unity. They possess the freedom of strikes, they have professional unions, which can adapt the tactics of a mass economic movement, according to the conditions of the present economic crisis.

"However, at present purely elemental tendencies are gaining the upper hand over organised movement, and without regard to the limited resources of the State, and without any reckoning as to the state of the industry in which you are employed, and to the detriment of the proletarian class movement, you sometimes obtain an increase of wages which disorganises the enterprise and drains the exchequer.

"Frequently the workmen refuse all negotiations and by menace of violence force the gratification of their demands. They use violence against officials and managers, dismiss them of their own accord, interfere arbitrarily with the technical management and even attempt to take the whole enterprise into their own hands."

The Ministry of Labour insisted that all conflicts should be solved not arbitrarily, but in Arbitration Courts and Conciliation Councils. "Workmen, comrades, our Socialistic ideals shall be attained not by the seizure of separate factories, but by a high standard of economic organisation, by the intelligence of the masses, and the wide development of the country's productive forces." The appeal ends: "Workmen, comrades, remember not only your rights, but also your duties, think not only of your wishes, but of the possibilities of granting them, not only of your own good, but of the sacrifices necessary for the consolidation of the Revolution and the triumph of our ideals" (10th July).

Thus, having at last realised at what a pace liberated Russia was sliding down a dangerous incline of licentious

appetites and utter negation of all discipline, the Socialists, now become Ministers, began to remind the masses of their duties, if not to their country, then at least to the Revolution. But, like the soldier who openly declared to Kerensky that he would rather be a living deserter than a dead hero, the workmen remained deaf to this new and disagreeable exigency of their leaders. The transition from limitless praise of the labouring masses, of their intelligence, maturity, and so on, to any kind of criticism proved extremely difficult. Moreover, here, as in the task of organising defence or creating the new Government, the policy of the Soviet was full of contradictions, reflecting both a variety of sectional vacillations and the struggle between a dogmatic application of Socialism and the more opportunist tendencies of the Right. For instance, on 3rd August, at the very climax of the military and Government crisis, the Economic Section of the Soviet found it necessary to present an inquiry concerning the Government's economic policy and demanding "the granting of the rights of State authority to local organisations, formed according to the principles of revolutionary democracy." Replying to this demand, Skobeleff acknowledged that local organising power was in advance of the central authorities, but he insisted that regional organs, whether elected or unelected, should be subordinated to the central authorities.

Economic conditions proved themselves to be the sensitive apparatus which most exactly marked the general dislocation of the State organism. How true were the words of those who had said that transport and the entire national economy were a prey to a "diseased spirit"! Russia possessed grain, possessed food-supplies, raw material, even labour was sufficient. But that inner organising link, which joins separate

human lives into a strong and well-ordained human society, had snapped. The old compulsory forms of a community which had created the Great Russian Empire had disappeared, having outlived themselves and being incapable of adapting themselves to the new demands of the times, or of resisting the enemy's blows. The ideologists of democracy thought that old forms might at a moment's notice be replaced by new ones, boundlessly free, erected apart from any ties of succession with old forms of life and custom, upon a bare abstract framework. In their haste to imbue the masses with Socialistic doctrines, the orators spoke to them of rights and claims, but forgot to tell them of their duties. Soldiers and soldiers' wives, street-sweepers and engine-drivers, medical assistants and porters—all presented nothing but demands, demands, and demands. The Revolutionary Democracy encouraged such exigency, viewing it as the expression of human personality freed from oppression, and absolutely forgetting that human dignity consists not so much in receiving life's bounties as in giving one's best to life. Innumerable trade unions, organised in haste and falling at once under Bolshevist influence, also presented the most devastating claims to the State, to municipalities, and to private business. At first they scarcely ever met with any refusal. As early as April the Minister of Ways and Communications, Nekrasoff, sanctioned such claims of the railwaymen as played an important part in the deterioration of the railways, for they ruined the finances without demanding a fixed output of work, and gave up the management to the mercy of committees. A month after the Revolution foremen in various workshops began to receive wages of 700-800 roubles a month, while professional engineers were left with their former salaries of 300-400 roubles.

Only the Russian intelligentsia remained silent in the midst of this bacchanalia of demands. School-teachers, who received pittances, passed resolutions that new advances of salaries should be extremely moderate in order "not to overburden the revolutionary treasury." Officers and Government officials were also silent, although the frightful increase in the cost of living placed them in a most precarious material situation. There is no exaggeration in saying that not a single union of intellectual workers ever presented material demands.

Later, when this insane lust had borne its bitter fruit, when the Socialist Ministers had come into touch with the State mechanism and realised that the State and people are inseparable, they attempted to disabuse the masses. But it was too late. The more so, as Socialistic programmes do not provide for the value of brain-work, and everything in them is based upon the priority of manual workers over the rest of the population. Marx spoke only of the rights of proletarian dictatorship, while the rest of humanity was placed in interdict under the prejudicial title of *bourgeoisie*.

Faithful followers of Marx's doctrine considered it their duty to discredit all the intelligentsia in the eyes of the Russian masses by confusing it with the *bourgeoisie*. Tremendous discontent had accumulated amidst the people during the old régime. The implacable Marxist gospel preached by the revolutionaries transformed this legitimate and natural discontent into a veritable exasperation, directed against the propertied and educated classes, which had themselves suffered from absolutism and were now condemned by a new ruling class to pay for the sins of its predecessors.

Strictly speaking, the Russian Revolution, *i.e.* the revolutionary struggle against autocracy for the freedom

and rights of the people, had lasted scores of years, and had created thousands of heroes and martyrs, who had given their energy and life for the realisation of their ardently desired ideals. A vast majority of the revolutionaries belonged to the nobility and the *bourgeoisie* merely because there were more educated people among those classes.

But when the longed-for days of freedom came at last all this was forgotten and the entire superior strata of society were placed under suspicion. At first, indeed, the masses and their soldiers were extremely good-natured. The wave of hatred did not sweep over Russia all at once, but burst out sporadically, here and there directed by some evil hand. In any case the Revolution was not the outcome of class antagonism. It was born of the war, the famine and the debility of the old political régime. This is a fact which ought always to be borne in mind in order to comprehend the influence of the subsequent class-war propaganda.

A wonderful solidarity among all classes of the community marked the beginning of the Revolution. Every one sided with Freedom against Tsarism. Only the police endeavoured to defend the old régime. And the policemen were indeed cruelly dealt with. But they were usually seized fully armed, while handling machine-guns, and firing at the crowd by order of Protopopoff. This shooting lasted in Petrograd for four days. When the last machine-gun policemen were removed from the belfry of St. Isaac's Cathedral, a new and highly original order prevailed in the city. There were no police. Only the somewhat comical figures of a hastily organised militia appeared here and there. There were no authorities whatever. Day and night the streets were seething with soldiers. Whole units rolled into the Taurida Palace "to save the Revolution." External forces

which might hold back these crowds no longer existed. And yet, not only during the revolutionary honeymoon, but actually for several months, life in the large cities was almost perfectly safe, in spite of the fierce propaganda of class-war and the shameless incitement of the masses against the *bourgeoisie*, which embraced all persons with white hands. This Marxist moulding of the masses emanated from the Soviet.

The masses seemed to feel that they were being driven to a dangerous course and did not give way at once. Even in the country, where, as in the towns, all the police were immediately arrested and sent to the front, where no new authorities were established to replace the old, the peasants at first assumed an expectant attitude. The expression, " We'll just wait for the new Law," was a current phrase, which reflected the peasants' habitual wariness. And they actually did wait. They cast longing glances at the landowners' land, cattle and other goods, but abstained from plunder, awaiting the order from the Centre.

Then appeared agitators, sometimes Bolsheviks, but more often Social-Revolutionaries with mandates from the Petrograd or local Soviet, and explained to the peasants that they had nothing to wait for, but must hasten to execute the will of the people and " expropriate the expropriators," that is, take everything from the landowners.

It was just as difficult for peasants to withstand such arguments as it had been for soldiers to maintain discipline after the Order No. 1. Gradually the Russian country-side was turned into a veritable hell. Landowners' houses, corn-stacks, stables, cattle-sheds—all were set ablaze. Their owners were turned out, sometimes murdered. Already, before the November Revolution, some districts had not a single landowner left.

Large landowners who exploited their land by hired labour were not the only ones to suffer: millions of peasant small-holders and merely well-to-do peasants shared the same fate. The deepening of class-consciousness, or rather of class-antagonism, went full swing.

But the creation of a new life upon such basis proved no easy matter; instead of a new, perfect, free order there was a return to the old primitive forms of cave-dwellers, when *homini hominus lupus est*, when each strove to snatch the utmost he could get for himself, sacrificing nothing for the community. All the moral foundations erected at such hard cost by generations were smashed like brittle glass beneath the blows of the soulless theory of economic materialism. Liberty, unfettered either by law or by a habit of self-discipline, unbridled the masses, while the socialistic intelligentsia seemed to sanction the increasing immorality by decking it out in the attire of class-struggle.

Whatever were the errors and even crimes of the masses, the responsibility for them rests primarily with their leaders. With passionate conscientiousness the masses endeavoured to unravel the chaos of novel ideas which had flooded their obscure brains. For even the words were utterly incomprehensible and un-Russian, "republic," "contribution," "annexation," "internationalism," "socialism." To what curious misinterpretation were those strange words subjected, which were destined to upset the entire Russian life. But even Russian words expressing general notions, not only political, but even geographical, held absolutely no meaning for the illiterate peasants, workmen, and soldiers gathered at meetings or in the Soviets. They were so willing to repudiate Constantinople and the Straits without the slightest notion of their whereabouts.

They adopted the resolution in favour of the self-determination of peoples, with no inkling as to what nationalities inhabited the Russian Empire, and so on. The chaotic mentality of the crowd made itself particularly evident during the elections. Universal suffrage had been adopted both by the Cadets and the Socialists as an essential basis of democracy, but there existed very important divergencies. Shall the army vote? What is to be the qualification of age and residence? The Cadets insisted that the age limit should be fixed at twenty-five, and that the vote should be granted to any one who had lived a year in a given locality. The Revolutionary Democracy demanded that the vote should be granted to all citizens of both sexes from the age of eighteen without any qualification as to term of residence, and that full rights should be given to soldiers both at the front and in the rear. In the end the Government accepted the Socialist formula, only raising the age limit. All citizens of both sexes over twenty years obtained the right of voting in municipal and Zemstvo elections, and subsequently for the Constituent Assembly. During the summer new municipal councils were elected in almost every town upon the principle of universal suffrage. The Government cherished naïve hopes of obtaining in this way legally elected local organs, which would relegate the Soviets to the background. The election results were highly instructive. In the towns, where reserve regiments were quartered, the soldiers' vote decided the elections. Whole military units, influenced by this or the other socialistic group, voted for it *en bloc*. The soldier masses, more and more transformed through loss of discipline into a soldier rabble, developed a somewhat original understanding of their new civic rights. Liberty of election was encroached upon at every turn. Acts of violence,

degenerating ever more frequently into crime, were constantly performed. For instance, at the beginning of August, in the small district town of Egorievsk, after a meeting addressed by a Bolshevik, Kohan, a crowd of soldiers severely handled the mayor and a member of the municipal council for their refusal to give out election forms to 1000 soldiers who had arrived in town after the publication of the electors' register.

Side by side with cases of direct violence, the electors were being systematically terrorised, particularly in the factories, where the committees acted despotically and the workmen were compelled to join certain parties for fear of remaining out of work. The profusion of promises, which always forms the negative side of every election campaign, reached its climax in the face of the inexperienced and over-confident Russian electors. The magic words—peace, bread, and land—were bandied about by all Socialist sections. They promised—and possibly many believed in it themselves—a speedy millennium. Their speeches, though frequently exceedingly abstract, were very realistically interpreted. When the Revolutionary Socialists carried at the Moscow municipal elections a victory at which they themselves were alarmed, many people jokingly said that it happened owing to the list of Social-Revolutionary candidates being labelled No. 3. In Russian the figure "3" and the letter "Z" are written the same way, and the magic word "Zemlia" (land) begins with the letter Z. The more simple-minded electors used to come to the town-hall to inquire when the land would be distributed to them, as they had voted for the Social-Revolutionaries, who promised land to all toilers. On the whole, the almost illiterate mass of Russian electors, both men and women devoid of any political experience, exhibited such a gregarious state of mind,

such a lack of comprehension, and such a childish desire to obtain the utmost advantage for themselves, that bitter doubt as to whether universal suffrage could benefit a country at Russia's stage of political development, crept into many minds. Under such wholesale infatuation the Socialists everywhere obtained the majority, and the Social-Revolutionaries headed the list. Still, the Cadets scored an average of one-third of the total votes, and in some places had an absolute majority.

The first result of the Socialist control of the municipal and Zemstvo councils was a complete financial disorganisation of these institutions, already impoverished by the war. Of course there could be no question of abuse. On the contrary, the Socialists were influenced by a sincere desire to conduct business in the best possible way. Contrary to the Bolsheviks, the Revolutionary Democracy undoubtedly possessed practical honesty. (I say practical because, bound by doctrine, they could not afford the luxury of intellectual honesty.) But municipal economy is, primarily, a huge business enterprise. Its stability is based upon a wise distribution and payment of labour, and the discipline of the workers. The Socialists, accustomed to consider the State as a principle opposed to their ideals, entered the Government and local institutions, not so much as citizens entrusted with the guarding of the entire population's interests, but as conquerors occupying a fallen citadel. They forgot that they represented the population as a whole, and not only met all the workmen's demands half-way, but often prompted their exigencies. In their haste to redress the social injustices of the old régime, they upset all existing relations at one stroke, and overwhelmed the workmen with bounties at the expense of a Treasury already ruined by war. Just as

in the army the soldier was put to the top, while the commanding staff was not only set aside but humiliated, so in the industrial army manual workmen enjoyed all the privileges and became the objects of coarse flattery, whereas brain workers were set aside and placed under suspicion.

The economic life of large cities like Petrograd, Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov, and others became disorganised. Trams barely crawled along, because the workmen, while receiving wages for an eight hours' day in the repair shops, had nevertheless almost ceased to repair the cars. It is curious to note that the electric-power stations, whose staff is by far the most highly trained, remained in perfect order.

The municipal councils also adopted an extremely unreasonable food policy. Instead of being ameliorated, the food supply grew worse. This may be primarily explained by the fact that the supply was influenced by the general disorganisation of transport and labour output. Loaders at wharves and stations, pointsmen, train-linkers, packers—in a word, millions of men working at the food supply—ceased day by day to perform their duties. The cost of their collective idleness to the State and nation probably never entered their heads. Yet owing to their slackness the arrival of food supplies to the towns and the northern timber regions daily diminished. But neither individual workers nor collective labour organisations took heed of the nation's interests, and merely supported their own professional advantages. At one of the largest Volga ports, Tsaritsin, where corn was shipped for the whole of northern Russia, enormous supplies of grain lay rotting, because Russian loaders had struck, continually raising prices. Fifty roubles a day were already insufficient. In the meantime they opposed by armed force a company of Persian

loaders, who were willing to work at more moderate terms.

At the same time, the new food-supply committees, organised throughout the country, followed a policy of arbitrary interference in the industrial and economic life of the country, placing fatal obstacles in the way of private initiative and private commerce. The Tsar's Government had also acted in the same manner in some branches, such as the purchase and distribution of grain. Such measures were called for by war circumstances, but they demanded strong Government authority and national discipline.

The Provisional Government, apparently expecting such self-discipline from a people liberated from an autocratic régime, augmented State intervention in all sections of the supply of primary necessities. The Socialists, who always advocated the centralisation of all economic functions in Government hands, particularly insisted upon such measures. But the Cadet Ministers also followed the same course in spite of protests from a section of the party. Already towards midsummer of 1917, bread, sugar, meat, eggs, and butter were controlled by the Government, although, strictly speaking, it did not even possess the proper apparatus for effecting such a monopoly. Both producers and consumers suffered equally, particularly in the large towns. Petrograd and Moscow were even then short of food. The privations endured by the population at the present moment are but a painful protraction of a long agony. In 1917 the advanced section of the Russian intelligentsia, which found itself playing the part of municipal rulers, was firmly convinced that the organisation of food supply would be impossible without replacing private commercial interchange by that of State monopoly. The results were deplorable. Ironical

tongues said that it was an organisation of famine, not of food supply. But here, as elsewhere, the power of doctrine proved stronger than the voice of reality.

The Russian Revolution will provide the social psychologist with extremely interesting studies of the psychology of the masses and their leaders, while it must serve as a clear warning to the politician. It is a cruel object-lesson, demonstrating that a life of complete liberty, unfettered by any compulsory system, may only be possible to man after he attains the highest degree of culture. Does there exist anywhere in the world a nation which as a whole has attained such a standard? When this compulsion does not exist, then the evil charms of the dark instincts of hatred, lust, and cruelty arise from the depths. Yet at the same time the very state of impunity creates a kind of oppressive irritation among the masses, as though the consciousness of wrong lay hidden in the people's soul and begat exasperation. And in Russia this exasperation did not diminish, but grew in proportion to the satisfaction of the demands of the masses. Evidently their inner equilibrium was broken by degrees, as the habits of effort, compulsion, and obedience to duty gave way. Like children, they longed for some one, wiser and stronger than they, to say, "This cannot be, you dare not do it." But no authoritative voice spoke out to them, and, like children, they fell a prey to blind rage.

Two principles seemed to be at war with each other in the soul of the Russian people, as they listened to the voices of their new leaders—the lust of usurpation and the consciousness that there is no truth in violence.

One may boldly assert that, despite all the crimes committed by the mob, the masses were more innocent and better than their leaders. Particularly the peasant

masses, in whose midst the deep, partly religious, partly moral conceptions of good and evil were still alive, whose balance had not been over-strained by the deadening roar of the factory wheel, nor their conscience stunned by the still more deadening Marxist doctrine. In the midst of the working classes themselves, the voices of separate individuals or organised groups sometimes made themselves heard, reminding men of the interests of the whole, of the existence of Russia, whom every one was bound to serve. But the Revolutionary Democracy was incapable either of hearkening to these voices or, still less, of uniting all such patriots in common service for the country. For the Soviet leaders had so long considered themselves as the servants, not of Russia, but of the Revolution and the proletariat.

A resolution passed by the staff of one of the railway workshops in the province of Saratoff may be pointed out as an example of workmen's honest adherence to their duty. Early in September Moscow Bolsheviks endeavoured to provoke a strike. The workmen passed a resolution to the effect that " they considered a strike of the engine staff as inadmissible, criminal, treasonable, and contradictory to civic duty. Officials and workmen adjure their comrades to refuse to strike and summon them to self-restraint." This was not the only case, but those who preached self-restraint were by no means popular.

Not even the unembellished picture, honestly drawn by the Government at the Moscow Conference, could change the mentality of the leaders or the representatives of the popular masses present at the Conference as delegates of the Soviet. They were simply incapable of realising how far their behaviour, their immature ideas, their support of this or the other group, reacted upon the destiny of the State. And this, although all that the

members of the Government said was ruthless in its absolute clearness.

The new Minister of Commerce and Industry, a well-known economist of the Marxist school, S. Prokopovish, in a warning speech delivered at the State Conference, spoke of the disorganisation of transport and trade. He said that the Donetz coal-mines were producing only 50 per cent of their normal output, that the disorderly seizure of land was ruining agriculture and threatening the towns and northern provinces with famine. He reminded the workmen that "all classes of the population were interested in industrial development—consumers and producers, business-men and workmen," and therefore it behoved them to safeguard industry, not to ruin it.

He was applauded both from Right and Left, perchance by the very same men who drove out engineers in wheel-barrows or threw them into blazing furnaces. In the same way they applauded the Minister of Finance, Nekrasoff, although the picture drawn by him of the state of Russian finances was of the gloomiest. "The new revolutionary régime costs the State far more than did the old," was the minister's frank statement.

Nekrasoff started his career as an Octobrist, then remained for a long time in the Cadet party, which he left in connection with the Ukraine problem, as he supported the policy of Ukraine independence. Already before the Revolution he had entered into close relations with circles of the Left. In the Provisional Government he sided with Kerensky and had great influence with him. Combined with Nekrasoff's skill and inclination for upholding good relations with sections of the Left, his statement concerning the cost of the democratic régime carried especial weight. Using the language

of figures, the Minister of Finance proved that the cost of democracy to the people was beyond comparison heavier than that of autocracy. "The new food-supply committees alone, organised after the Revolution, will demand from the Treasury 500 millions a year." Whereas during the Tsarist régime the upkeep of all the ministries cost 48 millions.

In some regions the payment of State revenues had decreased by 60 to 70 per cent. Meantime the Soviet Commission dealing with separation allowances for soldiers' wives had drawn up a scheme for such a liberal increase of allowances that instead of the former 700 millions a year, the expenditure would reach 11 milliards.

And yet when after such a speech Kerensky summoned every one to make sacrifices for the motherland, disdainful smiles of mistrust flitted over the countenances of the members of the Soviet, the workmen and the soldiers, who filled the Left sector of the theatre. The Right—the *bourgeoisie* section—applauded far more lustily. Certainly not because the Russian *bourgeoisie* as such proved more altruistic, and the Russian democracy more selfish, but simply because proprietary Russia had accumulated far more knowledge and understanding of statesmanship than the masses of the people. Men who have passed through a university or secondary school training can more easily realise the necessity of a strict State system and general submission to laws, however irksome, than those who have never learned to lift their eyes from the narrow groove into which they were born. Instead of adopting a firm statesmanlike standing and endeavouring to explain to the people the active possibilities and claims of real life, those who assumed the part of inspirers and spiritual leaders of these illiterate masses, unused to thinking, were them-

selves tossed between Marxism and flashes of common sense.

The State Conference exhibited the results of such duality. The question of the formation in one way or another of a strong power, a power which not only gives but claims, and if necessary chastises, arose in all its tragic inevitableness. This was realised by both sides. The main point of the divergency lay in the question as to who should be the mainstay of this power—the Soviets or a disciplined military force. The dispute was settled, settled irrevocably, by the sharp rupture between Korniloff and Kerensky.

# CHAPTER X

## KERENSKY'S SWAN SONG

Soviets trend towards Bolshevism—The fall of Riga—Lavr Korniloff and the Korniloff affair—Arrest of Generals and chaos in the army —Trotsky's appearance—The Democratic Conference—The Soviets opposed to the Coalition Government—The Council of the Republic—The Bolsheviks organise an insurrection.

BEGINNING from March and ending with November, the Revolutionary Democracy grouped in the Soviet was all the time sliding towards the Left, like a sandhill washed away by the waves.

Already in Moscow the motion passed by the Left majority, and their persecution of proprietary Russia and the army commanders, their cowardly disinclination to acknowledge the real requirements of life, especially in questions of food supply and labour, their friendship with their brethren in ideas—the Bolsheviks—all this showed that the Soviet circles were prepared to make concessions only to the Left. They were likewise driven in the same direction by their former trend of thought, and especially by the success of Bolshevist propaganda among the masses, the ground for which had been prepared by the Socialistic Centre itself.

During the Moscow Conference the Bolsheviks stirred up disorders in that city, taking the form of a series of strikes, which were partly successful, though some were quickly suppressed. The influence of the Bolsheviks

over the Soviets was likewise growing, as the bulk of the latter consisted of persons of indefinite and unstable political opinions. In the Petrograd Soviet and the Executive Committee the former leaders—Skobeleff, Tsereteli, Chheidze—no longer exercised their former influence. On the 11th of September Prince Tsereteli had a battle royal with the Petrograd Soviet before he succeeded in securing the adoption of the resolution on the necessity for the introduction of capital punishment in the army, his opponents stigmatising this as a counter-revolutionary measure. The furious debate showed the acute divergence of opinions in the Soviet. Prince Tsereteli bitterly emphasised the fact that the Bolsheviks, who were chiefly to blame for the decay of the army, listened to communications concerning military disorders with the proud air of victors.

The resolution concerning capital punishment was passed with great difficulty. But, as if to conciliate the Bolsheviks, at the next meeting of the Soviet a motion was passed by a great majority, protesting against the Bolshevist comrades who had been arrested for the July revolt or their German associations being still detained in prison. Plekhanoff, in drawing attention to the increasing influence of the Bolsheviks in the Soviet, wrote: "Tsereteli has come to such measures as are an abjuration of Zimerwald. Therefore his admirers are turning against him, are voting against his motion, and are ready to follow another leader" (*Yedinstvo*, 8th September). This was written a few days before the Korniloff affair. Independently of this, after the Moscow Conference, the Soviet policy took a decided turn to the Left. And this in spite of the fact—or perhaps because of it—that the anarchistic ferment in the masses stirred up by the Bolsheviks began to assume such a dangerous character that Kerensky was obliged to

concert with Korniloff decided measures against the expected insurrection.

But when Korniloff began to make preparations for carrying out this plan, the Government had not the courage to steer the ship of State in the right course, or to strengthen their position with the help of the troops who were still loyal. The actual Bolshevist danger, which was already in sight, seemed less terrible to the Government than the imagined danger of Korniloff's military dictatorship. Fears of the same imaginary danger left the Socialists of the Centre quite oblivious of the fact that German troops were occupying the whole of the Western borderland of Russia, and were threatening at any time to strike at its heart.

" Surely it is not necessary that Riga should fall in order that the need for discipline in the army should be understood ? " This was said by Korniloff, five days before the fall of Riga, when the Commander-in-Chief already knew that he was not able to hold the town, the capture of which, greatly increasing the difficulty of defending the Gulf of Finland, opened for the Germans the way to Petrograd both by land and sea. But it turned out that even the capture of Riga did not knock any wholesome sense of the necessity of national self-defence into Revolutionary Democracy. The official *communiqué* mentioned that the regiments left the battle-field of their own accord, that " the disorganised masses are retreating in an irresistible torrent, and are filling all the roads." The Soviet replied by long speeches of protest against " the enemies of the Revolution, who never fail to take advantage of the misfortune at the front in order to play a great political game." The *Izvestia* accused the authors of the official communiqué of " a malicious distortion of actual events." " The General Headquarters notice only the reckless

gallantry of the officers, while their silence as regards the soldiers, the emphasising of exceptional cases of treachery and cowardice among them, acquires a very definite and very dangerous meaning. It is evident that while the army is fighting gallantly and is dying for the cause of the Revolution, a clique of shady persons, unusually near to the higher commanding circles, is carrying on a hideous provocation, and by means of systematic lies and a perversion of facts is setting Russia against her army, and is taking advantage of the misfortune which has befallen the country for sinister purposes with the design of throwing discredit on the revolutionary order in the army, of setting the masses of the population, both at home and abroad, against the Russian Revolution" (*Izvestia*, 4th September).

With the Soviet majority in such a mood, vain were Prince Tsereteli's belated demands for the re-introduction of capital punishment into the army, and vain was the still more belated order issued by Kerensky in which he at last declared that it was necessary to support the authority of the officers, "who made no demands, who never made any representations of their needs. The flower of the army, its officers, had lived through the bloodless Revolution in fraternal unity with the soldiers, consolidating the work of those who had thrown off the shameful fetters of slavery. The officers have shown that they are one flesh with the people." Then followed a short enumeration of all the undeserved trials which had fallen to the lot of the officers: distrust, curtailment of rights, insults, mockery. In spite of all, the officers had remained at their posts, had "shown the greatest heroism, manifested by the fact that in some units almost all the officers had been killed off. No less courage had been shown by those

officers who, hand in hand with the committees and the more intelligent soldiers, had struggled against those who understood liberty to mean freedom from all obligations, who had fallen under the evil influence of the conscious or unconscious agents of the Kaiser, and, hiding their cowardice under ideal watchwords, were bringing ruin and treachery into the ranks of the army" (4th September).

Had Kerensky used such language in addressing the representatives of the whole of organised Russia, gathered together at the State Conference in Moscow in August, perhaps it might have arrested the ruin of the army, it might have healed the breach between the Government and the army commanders. Only by joint action could they have saved Russia from Bolshevist anarchy and the ruin of the army. Such an agreement seems all the more possible, as the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Korniloff, round whom the most experienced Generals had gathered, was, of course, no counter-revolutionary, that is to say, was in nowise striving to restore the old régime.

The son of a Transbaikal Cossack, Lavr Korniloff was a real democrat by birth. At the age of thirteen he was still herding cows in the sleepy hollow of a Siberian village. Thanks to his exceptional abilities he made his way, finishing his course of studies in the high school and entering the army as an officer. In Russia officers did not form a caste open only to the gentry, as in Prussia, but any one with a certain amount of education might get a commission. On finishing at the military academy of the General Staff, Korniloff went to Turkestan and wrote some interesting works on this picturesque and remote region, and secured a great influence over the natives, having learned the Turkoman language. This

acquaintanceship proved to be of great service to him later, after he was arrested. The Tekke Turkoman Regiment treated him less as a prisoner to be guarded than as a chief to be protected.

During the war Korniloff commanded a division. In Galicia in the Carpathians his division had to cover the retreat of the whole Russian Army. For three days they withstood the pressure of greatly superior forces, and it was only thanks to their steadiness and heroism that the army escaped with its artillery, munitions, and material. Almost the whole division perished. Korniloff was wounded and taken prisoner. He managed to escape from prison, disguised as a beggar. In this he was aided by his knowledge of languages, and probably also by his exceedingly democratic appearance, for he had nothing of the "General" about him.

After the Revolution Korniloff was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the troops of the Petrograd district, but he did not occupy this post for long, as he could not permit the Petrograd Soviet to interfere in his military orders. He was then appointed to command an army, and after Alexeieff's resignation he was made Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the whole Army. Korniloff was a brave soldier, well-educated, honest, and upright. As a fervent patriot he knew and perceived all the defects of the Tsarist régime, and understood that a return to the old order was not only impossible but even undesirable for Russia.

Korniloff was not opposed to the democratisation of the army, but he said that "an army which had lost its discipline was more dangerous than any wild beast," and strove to reorganise the army in such a way that respect for the soldier's person should be compatible with the demands of discipline.

At the Moscow State Conference Korniloff declared:

"I am not against army committees." In his scheme of army reforms he again said plainly that the committees must not interfere in matters of strategy or discipline, but must still be retained for purely economic questions.

"It is surprising how little these new elective institutions have diverged from the straight path, and how often they have lived up to the ideal, sealing their gallant work with blood."

These words are the best refutation of the accusations and suspicions of the Left, who were alarmed at Korniloff's growing popularity. Patriots had great hopes of his influence for Russia, hopes doomed, alas, to a tragic disappointment.

The fear of a counter-revolution, which reigned not only in the Smolny Institute, whither the Soviet had migrated, but also in the Winter Palace, where Kerensky had taken up his abode, prevented the possibility of any agreement between the Premier and the military commanders.

The strained relations, so full of mutual distrust, ended in a catastrophe the details of which await the historian. In order to sift this matter calmly and impartially it is necessary to know all the preliminary negotiations, to re-establish that chaos of conflicting influences, intrigues, and chance occurrences, which, like a net, enveloped the inexperienced Ministers, who could nowhere find serious support. The general position was as follows:

On the 9th of September there was a rumour all over Petrograd that General Korniloff was marching on the city in order to arrest the Soviet, and declare himself dictator. On the 10th of September the newspapers announced that Vladimir Lvoff[1] had come to Kerensky

[1] The very appearance of V. Lvoff in this affair is even now incomprehensible. A member of the Duma, belonging to the Right wing, narrow

and, in the name of General Korniloff (the Headquarters in Moghilev), had demanded that all civil and military authority should be placed in the hands of the General and a new Cabinet be formed.

This is how subsequent events are described by Boris Savinkoff, the revolutionary then acting as Minister of War. According to his account, among the members of the Officers' Union there was a group of men who were conspiring to overthrow the Government, and to make General Korniloff dictator. This was being done without Korniloff's knowledge.

General Korniloff, who was considered to be a loyal citizen, was at the same time dissatisfied with the weakness of the Government policy, and insisted on the necessity of an exceedingly powerful, revolutionary authority, in which I also agreed with him. . . . When, on the 5th-6th of September, at Headquarters I again told him that in the near future the Provisional Government would examine the bill which was being prepared by the order of the Prime Minister, for the measures to be taken at the base, he believed that the Government was no longer hesitating, and when bidding me farewell on the 6th September at Headquarters he declared that he would give his full support to the Prime Minister, for the good of the country. On my return to Petrograd I reported my conversations with General Korniloff to the Prime Minister, and on the evening of the 8th September the bill for legalising measures at the base (*i.e.* severe penalties for breaches of discipline) was to have been examined by the Provisional Government. But on the 8th September I was summoned to the Winter Palace, and the Prime Minister told me something that was a complete surprise to me. He told me that V. N. Lvoff had come to him with an ultimatum from General Korniloff, who demanded that the supreme authority should be given over to the Commander-in-

and insignificant, he had got into Prince Lvoff's Cabinet only because some one was wanted to manage ecclesiastical affairs. In the Provisional Government this rabid Monarchist, for some reason or other, began to vote with the Left wing, led by Kerensky. This man Lvoff, destitute of any serious ability, by the irony of fate was destined to play a tragic part in Russian history.

Chief, with all military and civil power over the country, and that he, the Commander-in-Chief, was to form a Cabinet in which I was to be Minister of War and the Prime Minister was to be Minister of Justice. The ultimatum was in writing, but was signed, not by General Korniloff, but by V. N. Lvoff himself. Then the Premier called Korniloff up on the Hughes' apparatus, and asked him—without reading out to him the text of the declaration signed by V. N. Lvoff—whether he was ready to sign the ultimatum presented by V. N. Lvoff ? General Korniloff replied, "Yes, I am ready to sign." On the same day (8th of September) the Prime Minister sent a telegram to General Korniloff at Headquarters, demanding that Korniloff should immediately give up his post and leave the army.[1]

Thus a great deal of suspicion and this conversation over the telephone, perhaps based on a misunderstanding, was sufficient for all communication between the Premier and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army to be broken off at once. Then followed a series of repressive measures against Headquarters. An order was sent to all the railways not to obey the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, and above all, not to transport any troops by his orders. It was in vain that efforts were made by General Alexeieff, Milyukoff, Maklakoff, and other public men, to act as intermediaries, to persuade the Government first of all to inquire into the matter, and only then to decide the fate—not only of a talented Russian General, but perhaps of the army itself. The Government at once took decisive measures against Korniloff and other Generals, who were defending Russia against Germany, such stern measures as it had not ventured to take against the Cronstadt sailors who in July had shot down peaceful inhabitants in the streets of Petrograd.

On the 11th of September an order was given for the arrest of the "insurgent General," who "wanted to

[1] "Boris Savinkoff's Account," *Rech*, September 26, 1917.

start a fratricidal war." This order was carried out. General Korniloff offered no resistance, and allowed himself to be arrested. Before his arrest, General Korniloff issued an Order from Headquarters, also dated 11th September, in which he declared that he never had any idea of becoming dictator, nor planned any insurrection or revolution, but had marched his cavalry on Petrograd in accordance with a preliminary agreement with Kerensky himself, who had wanted to have trustworthy troops at his disposal, as the Bolsheviks were again preparing for action.

This was likewise corroborated by B. Savinkoff's evidence: "The movement of the cavalry corps towards Petrograd had been undertaken by order of the Provisional Government for the protection both of the Government and of the Soviet, the representatives of which had in July been in no less danger than the Ministers" (*Rech*, 29th of September 1917).

In his last Army Order, issued at Mohilev on the 11th of September, General Korniloff explained the march of events to "commanders, commissaries, and elected organisations," and concluded the Order with the following words:

> I pledge you my word of honour, as an officer and a soldier, and assure you once more that I, General Korniloff, the son of a simple Cossack peasant, have by my whole life and not in words only shown my unfailing devotion to my country and to freedom, that I am alien to any counter-revolutionary schemes whatever, that I stand on guard over the liberties we have won, desiring only that the great Russian nation should continue to enjoy its independent existence.

Korniloff's Order did not get into the newspapers, which obtained their information and explanations only from Government circles. The true meaning of this conflict, so fatal to Russia, was understood by the

population only later, after the November catastrophe. After the lesson given by the Bolsheviks, many officers rushed to the Don Territory, to enter Korniloff's Volunteer Army, though in August they had believed him to be an enemy of the people. But for the higher officers the idea of Korniloff's being deprived of the supreme command was unthinkable. From the Generals commanding the Western, South-Western, and Rumanian fronts came telegrams requesting Kerensky not to dismiss the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, and expressing their complete solidarity with him. The most decisive opinion was formulated by the Commander of the South-Western front, General Denikin: "I am a soldier, and am not accustomed to beat about the bush. On the 29th of July at a conference with the members of the Provisional Government I declared that by a series of measures the Government had destroyed and corrupted the army and trampled our martial banners in the mud. I interpreted the fact of my having been allowed to remain in the position of Commander-in-Chief as the avowal by the Provisional Government of its heavy sin before the Motherland and its desire to amend the evil it had wrought. To-day I have received the communication that General Korniloff, who has presented certain demands which may yet save the country and the army, is to be dismissed from the post of Supreme Commander-in-Chief. Accepting this as a return of the authorities to the course of a deliberate destruction of the army, and therefore that of the country, I hold it my duty to announce to the Provisional Government that I will not follow the same course."

Such were the thoughts and words of one of the most gifted of Russian military leaders. But Kerensky, having completely lost his head, was no longer capable of hearkening to the voice of wisdom and honour.

By Kerensky's orders Generals Korniloff, Denikin, Lukomsky, and others were arrested and tried as "rebels, counter-revolutionaries, and enemies of the people."

They were in great danger, surrounded by soldiers whose minds had been inflamed by false rumours. Fortunately, however, when Korniloff was put into the Bykhov prison, he was surrounded by his faithful Turkomans, who protected not only him but also his fellow-prisoners, officers who were members of the Officers' Union.

Incomparably harder was the position of Generals Denikin, Markoff, Erdeli, and others, who had been arrested at Berdichev (Headquarters of the South-Western front). They were in constant danger of being lynched. In order to save their lives, they were transferred to the same prison in which Korniloff was incarcerated. On the way, as they were being taken along, scenes occurred which were a foretaste of the subsequent Bolshevist massacres of officers.

Neither Kerensky, who had appointed himself Supreme Commander-in-Chief, nor the committees even attempted to protect the Generals from insult by the soldiers.

A mob of soldiers met the arrested Generals and accompanied them to the railway station. They were not allowed to be taken in motor-cars, but were forced to walk. On the way there were cries of "Take them through the mud! Let them churn it up with their Generals' feet." There was a shower of insults and coarse jokes. The soldiers shouted: "Denikin, head up! Bring down your foot firmer! Look lively!" Stones were thrown. General Orloff was wounded in the head. It was only the self-sacrifice of the military Cadets who formed the escort that saved the arrested Generals from being mishandled, although no one had

any definite idea of what they were guilty. People merely repeated the accusations made by Kerensky: "Enemies of the people and counter-revolutionaries." This took place much later (16th of October). Before this, during the whole month, arrests were made among the military. An order was issued for the arrest of General Kaledin, the "ataman," or chief, of the Don Cossacks. He was at Novocherkassk, the capital of the Don Territory, and the Cossacks refused to give him up.

The arrest of Korniloff and other Generals was the final step that led to the long-impending breach between the whole of the army commanders and the leaders of Soviet circles. They spoke different languages, thought in different ways of the future of Russia, and sooner or later a breach between these two parties was inevitable. The military, with Korniloff at their head, found themselves incapable of taking the power into their own hands. Patriotic people, both national Socialists and large non-Socialistic organisations, with the Cadets at their head, were likewise unable to give Headquarters the requisite political support. At the critical moment Korniloff found himself in the company of such petty political adventurers as Zavoiko and Aladin. Responsible politicians tried to mitigate the catastrophe when all was practically lost. As a result, the two Russias who had met so inimically at the Moscow Conference, parted in a long and tragic divorce.

Kerensky, who shared the fears of the Soviet as regards counter-revolution, having branded Korniloff and Denikin as rebels and traitors, then got rid of all non-Socialistic Russia, and became wholly dependent on Soviet circles.

Again frail authority began to crumble away. The Cadet Ministers—Kokoshkin, Yurenieff, and Oldenburg—who disapproved of Kerensky's action against Korniloff,

left the Cabinet. A sort of Directory, under the name of The Five, was formed of the remaining Ministers. They were—Kerensky, Nekrasoff, Tereshchenko, Admiral Verderevsky, and General Verhovsky.

On the same day Russia was proclaimed a Republic. This was really an infringement of the rights of the Constituent Assembly, where the elected representatives of the people were to determine the form of government themselves. But the Left wing thought fit to establish a republic beforehand. Kerensky lost his head so far as to take upon himself the supreme command of the army. When Nicholas II., after removing the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch, declared himself the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the enormous Russian Army, people smiled. But every one knew that he had the wise and talented leader, General Alexeieff, at his back.

By the bitter irony of fate Kerensky was walking in the footsteps of the autocrat who had been overthrown by the Revolution, and with the self-assurance of a madman took upon his shoulders that awful military responsibility for which he had neither the knowledge, the talents, nor even the force of character.

And again General Alexeieff was beside him, ready, as before, to give up all his strength, all his patriotism, to the service of Russia. But just as before the decaying routine of despotism and the Tsar's prejudices had rendered impotent the heroism of the Russian soldier and the talents and energy of Russian Army leaders, so now General Alexeieff found himself before a new obstacle—revolutionary prejudices and the anarchy created thereby.

Like Nicholas II., Kerensky thought (perhaps sincerely) that he was necessary to Russia, and that in the army he would be of more use than General Korniloff, with all his military experience. Having risen to the

very height of military authority, the new Supreme Commander-in-Chief tried to bring the army to its senses —the very army which he himself had completely thrown off its balance.

In agreement with General Alexeieff, Kerensky drew up and issued an Order to the Army and Navy (14th of September) demanding the cessation of arrests and deposition of commanders, and the transportation of troops in accordance with the orders of the authorities.

This Order, signed by Kerensky and General Alexeieff, contained a part of the demands on which Korniloff had insisted in vain. "I order that the political struggle among the troops shall cease, and that all efforts should be directed towards strengthening our fighting power," was the very first clause. But how could it be expected that this Order would be obeyed when, before clearing up the Korniloff affair, the Government itself had already sent round a telegram directing the non-fulfilment of orders; when, in view of everybody, the higher circles were seething with political struggles, contrary tendencies clashed and chaos reigned, affecting all spheres of military and civil life. Under such conditions it was useless to speak of strong authority, of severe penalties, of duty.

The Order of the 14th of September remained a dead letter. Kerensky was powerless to put it into force, the more so as the Government commissaries who should have carried out the ideas of the Government and Revolutionary Democracy in the army listened principally to the Soviet, and not to the Ministers. Any real support of the ideas of a firm and sole authority could not be expected from the Soviet. To the latter this seemed a counter-revolutionary idea, coming chiefly from the Cadets, Right Socialists, and counter-revolutionary "Generals."

After the Korniloff affair the Soviet politicians, alarmed at the bare glimpse of the terrible spectre of strong authority, threw themselves in terror to the Left for support. This was merely an intensification of their former radical leaning to the Left. In spite of the fact that General Korniloff, in his evidence, had categorically denied the accusation of wishing to establish a military dictatorship, the Revolutionary Democracy was in a state of panic. At meetings, political and other, speeches were made on the growth of counter-revolution. At a meeting of the Executive Committee a member of the Government, the Minister Avksentieff, also proclaimed the danger which threatened the conquests of the Revolution.

From the leaders the panic spread to the soldiery. These rushed off to catch the "Kaledinists" and "Kornilovists." In Helsingfors, Viborg, Dvinsk, Reval, awful brutal massacres of officers took place. The poisonous seeds of class suspicion and civil war were cast in greater and greater abundance among the masses. Their mentality grew distorted, full of hate, goading them to crime. Under the Bolsheviks this hatred was to form the basis of government in the Soviet Republic. But the first Soviets must also share the responsibility of having darkened the minds of the people, since their preaching laid the foundation of the evil work.

The military chaos, dyed red with the blood of defenceless officers, was spreading in consequence of the interference of the Soviet in the affairs of the Government. Avksentieff, the Minister, spoke in the Soviet of the threatening advance of Kaledin's counter-revolutionary troops from the South (which turned out to be entirely wrong, as Kaledin had not moved anywhere nor undertaken any operations against the Provisional Government). To counter this, the Military Commission

of the Central Committee of the Soviet of Workmen's Delegates—according to Avksentieff himself—" without consulting the War Office, had called out a division of soldiers and destroyers from Finland to Petrograd. Such actions increase the danger and cause a panic," the Minister very truly reproached them. While the Soviet was trying, timidly and undecidedly, to take the command into its own hands, the Germans were preparing to land troops in Finland. This was public knowledge and discussed in the Press. But neither the plans of the Germans nor the war in general troubled the Soviet very much. The members were occupied with the question of creating a new authority. On the 13th of September, at a meeting of the Soviet Executive Committee, Kameneff (the same who had been in the service of the Tsar's police) introduced a resolution in the name of the Bolsheviks for the formation of a Government composed of representatives of the revolutionary proletariat and the peasantry. He proposed to establish a democratic republic, to abolish private property in land for the gentry, to annul secret treaties, and immediately to propose a democratic peace.

In the name of the Mensheviks Prince Tsereteli brought in another resolution, with an appeal to forget " class interests for the sake of national " and support the Coalition Government. It is curious that for the purpose of keeping order Prince Tsereteli proposed to " act in close union with the Committee of the National Struggle against Counter-Revolution, attached to the All-Russian Central Committee."

Thus by the Mensheviks themselves was approved that inquisitorial tribunal, hastily organised under the stimulus of fear, which later on, under the name of the Extraordinary Commission for the Struggle against Counter-Revolution, Speculation, and Sabotage, became

a terrible instrument against all Russian citizens, not excepting the Mensheviks. It was Kameneff who won, and not Prince Tsereteli. His resolution was passed with the hearty support of the Social-Revolutionaries, led by Chernoff. The Bolsheviks got a majority of 279 against 115. The presiding officials, who had supported Prince Tsereteli's resolution, resigned. Thus came about the retirement of the Centre Socialists, with Chheidze at their head, who had tried to infuse Zimmerwald class principles into the execution of the national tasks of the defence and reconstruction of the Russian State. For six months they had been the most influential political group, on whom, to a considerable extent, depended the direction of State affairs. They were replaced by pure Zimmerwaldists, irreconcilable Socialists, who demanded that the doctrines of Karl Marx should be put into practice without delay and without reservation.

The Revolutionary Democracy was totally at a loss, and the position was made worse by the Bolsheviks, who had been released from prison without any trial and who immediately began a furious campaign against the Provisional Government. When Trotsky appeared after his release from prison he had an ovation.

It was becoming evident that the Executive Committee, which had been the guiding organ of the Soviet, no longer satisfied the Soviet which had elected it. The hero of the day was Trotsky. His speeches in the Soviet were warmly supported. Trotsky demanded a purely Socialistic Government, and reproached the Soviet for supporting Kerensky, " who had introduced capital punishment." At the same time Trotsky reminded them that the Jacobins had known how to defend the Revolution and fight the *bourgeoisie*, by establishing the guillotine for the latter.

The Mensheviks called out:

"The guillotine led to Napoleon!"

"I prefer Napoleon to Kerensky," replied Trotsky frankly.

Thus on the 22nd of September 1917 one of the future leaders of Soviet Russia on the one hand condemned capital punishment, and on the other pointed to Terror as the mainstay of Socialistic authority.

Practically, Terror was rearing its head in various places. Whole districts were pogromed. Landlords were being murdered. Officers were murdered. Engineers were murdered. The cost of human life began to depreciate as rapidly as the rate of exchange of the Russian rouble. The masses, with increasing greediness, tried to take from the new régime only profits and privileges, while their leaders clung to abstract watchwords which bore the high-flown name of "the conquests of the Revolution." This hazy term was acquiring a more and more Maximalistic interpretation, and, as a consequence, both the power of the Provisional Government and the influence of the first Executive Committee with which Kerensky and the Socialist Ministers were closely connected began to totter.

Before finally laying down its authority, the Central Executive Committee made one more attempt to find support in those democratic masses who had formerly upheld it. A so-called Democratic Conference was held in Petrograd. Besides delegates from provincial Soviets, there were representatives of co-operative societies, trade unions, national organisations, etc. No representatives of the so-called proprietary Russia were invited to the Conference, only those of the Revolutionary Democracy. The political chaos which reigned in the latter once more showed itself at this Conference,

the chief object of which was to determine what kind of Government must be set up. It was resolved that the Conference "was not to be dismissed until the conditions for the formation and functioning of Government were drawn up, in a form acceptable to the Democracy." But what form was the Government to take, in order to become really powerful, to preserve unlimited freedom, which was considered one of the "conquests of the Revolution"? The Democracy at the Conference was powerless to solve this problem. The Conference sat from the 27th of September till the 6th of October. Speeches were made by Kerensky, Ministers, soldiers—any one and every one made speeches. There was a moment when the Government almost succeeded in convincing the members of the Conference of the necessity for a Coalition.

The motion supporting a Coalition Government had already been passed by a majority of 766 votes against 688. But the victory was uncertain. Amendments began to be made. One was to the effect that no Cadets or "Kornilovists" were to take part in the Government. Then later, the whole motion was put to the vote a second time, and was rejected. There were 813 votes against it, 183 for it, and 80 non-voters.

This muddle in the settlement of a question which they themselves considered fundamental clearly shows what an unstable mass, unaccustomed to examine questions seriously, or seriously to support definite opinions, was the Revolutionary Democracy at that time. Ideas were so confused that in answer to the demand that no Cadets should be admitted, as implicated in the Korniloff affair, Mme. Ekaterina Kuskova, a representative of co-operative societies, a talented writer, and a Social-Democrat of the Plekhanoff group, said: "Such an amendment is unworthy of a

Democratic Conference, because it implies the supposition that some one in this hall might enter into a coalition with the accomplices of the Korniloff insurrection." Several months later (in February 1918), when Bolshevist tyranny was at its height, Ekaterina Kuskova courageously announced in the *Vlast Naroda* (People's Power), a Moscow paper, that practically every honest patriot must accept Kaledin's programme.

No one used such language at the Democratic Conference. The Revolution had overshadowed the Motherland. And Chhenkeli, the Georgian Social-Democrat, was right when he said bitterly: "I hear speeches about social, political, and other problems, but I do not hear the most important thing—I do not hear of any alarm for Russia's fate."

And how could this show itself in an assembly of people, the majority of whom considered themselves bound to stand up for the interests of a class and not of the State, of the "Internationale" and not the nation, persons among whom internationalists like Trotsky were growing more and more important? Trotsky demanded that the Soviets should take the Government into their own hands. On becoming a Government, the Soviets would appeal "to the democracies of the whole world, demanding peace. If this peace is not attained, then the proletariat will know what to fight for, and the Germans advancing on Petrograd will meet with such a repulse as they have never had before."

Of course, none of the audience could then guess what a future awaited the clever demagogue and eloquent orator Trotsky, that before them stood the future author of the most shameful Peace of Brest-Litovsk, and the future Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army. Even then, however, many acknowledged that in the person of Trotsky there had appeared a

dangerous political opponent of the Socialist Centre, while people with more penetration felt that he was a dangerous enemy of the Russian State and the Russian people.

Just as the Moscow State Conference did not strengthen but rather weakened the Provisional Government by whom it had been convened, so the Petrograd Democratic Conference did not strengthen but weakened the Central Executive Committee which had convened it. Two days after the termination of the Conference the Petrograd Soviet had its election. Chheidze, who had been the President of the Soviet from the first day of the Revolution, was not re-elected. Trotsky was chosen to fill his place. And, as if with the object of removing any suspicion as to the meaning of this election, a motion was immediately passed refusing any support whatever to "a Government of power and privilege and counter-revolutionary oppression."

In regard to Kerensky and his companions this sounded like bitter irony, as not only had they no privilege, but they had no power at all. Just a week before, Kerensky had published an order dispersing the Centro-Flot, *i.e.* the elective Naval Committee, which was a plaything of the Bolsheviks and the Germans. From the moment of its formation the Centro-Flot never obeyed any one. In the middle of September it issued a special order to the Baltic Fleet, protesting against the Government delaying the inauguration of a Federal Democratic Republic. As the Germans were already advancing on the Gulf of Finland this was a dangerous game to play, and it was extremely necessary to take energetic measures against the impudence of the sailors. But the Government proved powerless to exact obedience, and was obliged simply to cancel its order. It was likewise powerless against Finnish

separatism, already seeking for a way of throwing off the anarchistic yoke of the Russian soldiers' and workmen's Soviets and other Territorial Committees and Soviets, which were issuing orders not to obey the Finnish Government so long as the " bourgeois " took part in it.

Day by day the machinery of Government grew worse and worse. In the provinces and distant borderlands, and in the centre of Russia, the voice of State authority was no longer heard, and orders were given arbitrarily by one committee or another, which troubled themselves not at all about the interest of Russia as a whole. Workmen's organisations also showed complete oblivion of national interests. The railwaymen raised their demands, threatening to strike, although the transport of corn was in danger of failing. At the Donetz coalfields anarchy was on the increase. Some collieries were taken away from the owners by the miners. At others the latter not only demanded an enormous increase of wages, but the payment of " arrears " of all such rises for 1915–1916 as well. It must be mentioned that the extravagant economic demands of the miners were to a great extent justified by the fact that during the war the mine-owners had been specially barefaced in their exploitation of this laborious kind of work, taking advantage of the workmen being unable to leave. The shareholders got enormous dividends (up to 200 per cent), while wages were raised at a most parsimonious rate. The workmen's anger was growing. But this does not of course justify the brutal attacks and lynching of directors, engineers, and, in general, all the educated employees. Requisitions, robberies, and murders were common not only in the coalfields—they had spread all over Russia. And, moreover, though the law-courts continued to operate, they found no one to carry out the sentences passed.

The mob released criminals and prisoners, and the judges lived under perpetual threat of mob-law.

Under such circumstances, on the 8th of October Kerensky managed with great difficulty to form a new Coalition Government, as it was necessary to fill up the Directory. The Social-Democrats Prokopovitch, Gvozdeff, Nikitin, the Cadets Kartashoff, Kishkin, Konovoloff, Smirnoff, Tretyakoff, joined the Cabinet. The rest belonged to no particular party.

These parties whom the experiences and disappointments of the Revolution had not brought any nearer each other, but rather still further separated, who were neither welded together inwardly, nor supported from outside by homogeneous and cordial assistance—these people were called upon to solve more and more complicated problems of State, both in home and foreign politics.

The Government had to wage war with an enemy who had even formerly excelled the Russian Army in technical matters and in discipline. Meanwhile the army had almost ceased to exist. It was not an army, but merely a crowd of millions of men who disregarded not only their officers, but even their committees, and who thought only of how to get home quickly. Neither could that be called a navy where warships were ruled by committees which passed resolutions like the following: "We do not acknowledge the Provisional Government, which is an alliance between open Kornilovists and 'leaders of the Democracy.'" (This was the ironical name of Kerensky and his supporters.) Such a motion was passed by the Soviet in Cronstadt, a few days after the formation of the new Cabinet. Those were the September days when the Germans advanced from the sea and occupied the islands of Dago and Oesel, the next stages after Riga on the road to Petro-

grad. The Left Press again began to speak of "the struggle for peace, as the only condition of successful defence." The common watchword of all the Socialist papers, except the *Volia Naroda* (the organ of the Right Social-Revolutionaries), was: "The Revolution is in danger both from the Germans and from the Kornilovists."

Gorki's half-Bolshevist *Novaia Zhizn*, which considered itself the organ of the Social-Democratic Internationalists (a small group standing between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks), expresses very clearly the point of view held both by the Left Press and the Cronstadt sailors:

> The group of usurpers of power in the Winter Palace has undertaken to carry out the amended and supplemented programme of the 14th of August (*i.e.* the programme of the Left portion of the Moscow Conference). In reality it cannot and will not give us anything but war to the end instead of peace, lead instead of land, and a bayonet instead of bread. Until this Government of disgrace to the Revolution is liquidated it is of no use to think of the termination of the general crisis in the country, or of the cessation of anarchy. Only a democratic authority can end the counter-revolution, and not the present fictitious Government, which is the direct source of counter-revolution and Kornilovism (*Novaia Zhizn*, October 19th, 1917).

These were no chance opinions of separate groups, but the systematic enunciation of watchwords elaborated in the Centre, *i.e.* the Committee of the Social-Democratic party, and in the Petrograd Soviet, where the Bolsheviks were already playing the leading part. They made no secret of their work, but boldly prepared for battle, not only against the *bourgeoisie*, but against the Socialist Centre likewise.

On the 20th of October the Council of the Republic was opened in Petrograd. This was the name given to the

consultative assembly of representatives of all parties and large public organisations, convened by the Provisional Government. This was something like a Parliament where, in expectation of the Constituent Assembly, the public opinion of the country might find expression.

The Bolsheviks demonstratively left the Council on the first day, without even waiting to see what course affairs would take. Trotsky read a declaration, in which it was said that the Bolsheviks "did not wish to have anything in common with a Government of treachery against the people, nor with a Council of counter-revolutionary collusion. The foreign policy of the *bourgeoisie* and its Government is criminal. After forty months of war the metropolis is threatened with mortal danger. In answer to this there is a plan of removing the Government to Moscow. The idea of surrendering the revolutionary capital to the German troops in no way rouses the indignation of the bourgeois classes."

The inhabitants of Petrograd remembered these words with some irony several months after, when Trotsky and his colleagues themselves ran away from the Germans to Moscow. But in the Council of the Republic the Bolsheviks spoke for the last time as an irresponsible Opposition, and repeated all their war-cries: "All power to the Soviets. All the land for the people. An immediate democratic peace. Hail to the Constituent Assembly!"

Their declaration and departure, their speeches at meetings, the tone of their press, the extent of their secret and open agitation—all clearly showed that Lenin was again preparing for battle. Lenin himself, in spite of the fact that the arrested Bolsheviks had been liberated, very cautiously kept in hiding, but his hand was felt in the well-planned and aggressive activity of

the whole Left Socialist wing. The " push " was visible to all, and especially to the Government and those guiding circles which sat in the Council of the Republic.

All felt the approaching danger, but no one knew how to avert it, nor how to formulate it clearly, and, still less, how to rally and organise against it, in order in consort to repel the approaching foe. Each group, each party continued to live and think, shut in by party walls, repeating the same formulae, which had not only been worn threadbare during the Revolution, but had also shown their utter futility.

The Revolutionary Democracy, in the person of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, kept speaking of the inviolability of the Army Committees, of the repeal of capital punishment, of democratic peace without annexations and indemnities, of fighting the counter-revolution. Vainly did General Alexeieff try to convince the members of the Council not to slacken discipline, as without a firm military force it was impossible either to fight or to restore order at the base, demoralised by lawlessness and by the want of proper authority. The Council listened to his speeches in a very unfriendly spirit. Almost the same animosity was called forth by the speeches of the Populist-Socialists. E. Kuskova, in a powerful speech, full of bitter patriotism, called upon her audience " to battle against anarchy, to form a *bloc* of defencists, as it was necessary to take measures that we should really come out of the war without annexations and indemnities, which will not be paid *to* the Russian people, but *by* the Russian people." Her speech was interrupted by applause from the Right and criticism from the Left.

The public men, gathered together in the Council of the Republic, could not come to any agreement even on the question of defending Russia.

They disputed for several days, and when on the 1st of November they at last began to vote, it turned out that there were as many as five different motions : (1) the Menshevik ; (2) Menshevik-Internationalist ; (3) Social-Democrat ; (4) Left Social-Revolutionary ; and (5) Co-operative Societies, together with Cadets, Cossacks, Plekhanovists, and several national groups. Notwithstanding the anarchy at home and the military menace abroad, the same differences of opinion concerning words still continued, but the radical divergence in the points of view on the war, defence, and army grew greater and greater. The Left wing still continued to fear everything that gave grounds for suspicion of the desire for victory over the Germans. The aim of the Socialists was not victory, but the liquidation of the war. The Plekhanovists and Populist-Socialists alone supported the motion of the Co-operative Societies and the Cadets, who had moved that " Only an active defence of the country can protect the integrity of our country's independence." But the Socialists desired, by means of a democratic peace, to protect the interests of the proletariat of the whole world. It is obvious that both the aims and methods were totally different. It is not to be wondered at that the debate on the motions was very stormy, and resulted in all the motions being rejected. It turned out that the Council of the Republic, to which Kerensky's Government looked for support, had not even a majority desirous of defending Russia against the Germans. The last support was failing the Government. It now tried to take up the position of passive defence, and found at the same time that it had wrecked the Headquarters Staff of the Russian Army by discharging or arresting the ablest Generals, and appointing to responsible command not those officers who could be of most use in fighting the Germans,

but such as knew how to ingratiate themselves with the Army Committees.

The soldiery had been converted into a dangerous mob of embittered, excited, and, moreover, armed men. The prestige of the officers was dead. The officers made desperate attempts to save the army. In spite of the constant danger which threatened them from the soldiers, steeped in suspicion, they remained at their posts and tried to organise themselves. Some days before the Bolshevist *coup d'état* the Soviet of Officers' Delegates in Moscow passed a resolution, in which they demanded protection for the honour and lives of officers. The officers pointed out that it was necessary to revise the Declaration of Soldiers' Rights, to stop the interference of the Committees in the appointment of commanders, to cease political persecution (the Committees introduced regular examination of officers, to find out whether they were adherents of Korniloff or not), and, finally, to penalise the murder of officers. This last demand shows plainly what went on in the army at that time. The officers and a part of the soldiers who understood all the horror of the situation were quite powerless, as the Government and its army commissaries did not venture to struggle against the storm-tossed sea of soldiery. Kerensky took upon himself the responsibility of the Russian Army, without having any idea of what an army may, in general, be founded on. When experienced and honest military specialists tried to explain to him the secret of military psychology and organisation, he jealously suspected them of merely trying to get power into their own hands to establish a Dictatorship. This over-estimation of his own fitness for all forms of statemanship, and the under-valuation of the experience and knowledge of others, made Kerensky follow a path that led to the ruin of Russia, and also to his own.

The resolution of the Soviet of Officers ended in the following words, now seen to be prophetic: "On the day when the officers fall in the struggle against anarchy, the military power of Russia will be completely wrecked, and, together with it, the Russian Empire. The moment has arrived when silence is criminal."

But the voices of the people who thought of saving the Russian Empire did not reach the minds of the leaders of the mob, not to speak of the mob itself. They did not think of saving Russia, but only of saving the Revolution. And when Vladimir Burtzeff, the old Socialist, who had passed half his life in prisons, in exile, or as a refugee abroad, who was famous for having unmasked the Tsarist *agent provocateur* Azeff—when in his paper *Obstcheye Dielo* (the Common Cause) he raised a cry that the country was in danger, his former friends on the Left shrugged their shoulders contemptuously. Naturally, for did not Vladimir Burtzeff demand the release and rehabilitation of Korniloff, whom Revolutionary Democracy had branded as an enemy of the people? Burtzeff said that it was "necessary to apply to Kaledin, to place him and Korniloff in power. To appeal to the whole population of Russia, as was done in 1613, and to assemble all, all, all together under one banner to save the country."

But where was that strong arm which could do this, when the national flag was torn to rags and thrown in the mud, and the red flag that replaced it was torn by the Socialists themselves from each other's hands, when its red had ceased to be a symbol of the crimson dawn and had become the ominous symbol of bloody civil war?

The spectre of civil war hovered over Russia. Part of the Socialists openly called for armed insurrection. In Moscow preparations were being made for a general

strike of municipal employees, who wanted to fight the Provisional Government with the same weapons they had used against Tsarism, *i.e.* by stopping the trams, railways, and, if necessary, by cutting off the water and electric light. Socialists of the Centre went the rounds of the works and barracks, trying to bring the men to their senses, but they met with a very unfriendly reception. Bolshevist speeches were more acceptable to the masses. The Government took no measures at all, for what kind of serious measure was the order for Lenin's arrest, given by the Minister of Justice, or the order to close Burtzeff's paper, and even sequestrate the printing-office (evidently for the too hostile attacks on Kerensky and the passionate defence of Korniloff). The papers published soothing *communiqués*, saying that the necessary measures had been taken against the possibility of a Bolshevist attempt. Many believed this. Indeed, at that time very few people clearly understood the extent of the Bolshevist danger. The Government itself was foremost in this non-comprehension. All its actions and declarations bear the stamp of a wonderful, unpardonable, and thoughtless self-assurance. In answer to the British Ambassador's inquiry as to whether the Provisional Government was aware of the military preparations of the Bolsheviks, Kerensky replied that it was, and had every means at its disposal to overcome them finally. In reality there was nothing of the kind. In the Marie Palace, where the Council of the Republic held its meetings, and in the Winter Palace, where Kerensky lived and the members of the Government used to assemble, there were only floods of oratory. There was not even a plan of campaign. To make up for this, in the Smolny Institute, where the Petrograd Soviet was sitting, with Trotsky as leader, not only had a plan of campaign been drawn up, but it was being acted

upon. The object of the Bolsheviks was to seize power by force of arms, and therefore they, first of all, formed a Military Revolutionary Committee, attached to the Petrograd Soviet. On the 3rd of November the authority of this committee was acknowledged by the Petrograd garrison and fortress. The very next night the representatives of the committee came to the Headquarters of the Petrograd District, for the purpose of assuming control over them. Colonel Polkovnikoff, the Chief of the District, refused to acknowledge their authority. Then the representatives of the garrisons assembled in the Smolny Institute and sent telephonograms, saying that the "Headquarters had become the tool of counter-revolutionary forces. No garrison orders were to be fulfilled, unless signed by the Military Revolutionary Committee. The Revolution is in danger. Long live the Revolutionary Garrison." Kerensky was still Premier, but the Soviet had already appointed commissaries to all the military units, and to all especially important points in Petrograd, and informed the population of these appointments, announcing that the persons of the commissaries were inviolable, and that "any opposition offered to the commissaries would be regarded as opposition to the Soviet." The Headquarters of the District, instead of arresting the ringleaders and drawing up its forces for the defence of the members of the Government and Government institutions, issued a counter-proclamation. In the Winter Palace it was resolved to "regard the formation of the Military Revolutionary Committee as a criminal act, aggravated by its being committed in the theatre of war."

On the 6th of November, at a sitting of the Council of the Republic, Kerensky made a detailed report on the state of affairs, and on the measures which the

Government intended to take. In a parliamentary country his action would have been quite proper, but it produces an embarrassing, a tragi-comical impression if one remembers that at that time there was neither parliament nor Government authority in Russia, that while he was speaking the second Revolution, so fatal to the country, was taking place.

This was Kerensky's last overt, responsible, political act. And it was the last day of the authority exercised by the Revolutionary Democracy, as whose favourite Kerensky had begun his career as statesman. This is how he defined his view of the problems which life had so tragically set before Russia.

"Of late, the nearer the time approaches for the convening of the Constituent Assembly, which will for ever establish in Russia a free Democracy, obtained by the great Russian Revolution"—thus began Kerensky's speech—"the more impudent and brazen become the attempts of the two wings of Russian society to prevent and destroy the possibility of convening the Constituent Assembly." The Government considers it a duty to protect the liberty of every person, and "therefore remains apparently indifferent, in spite of exceedingly violent attacks."

The extreme Right demands that the Government should be replaced by a Dictatorship (voices from the Right benches correct him: "Strong Government!" and then asked him where did these reactionary demands come from?). Kerensky could only name two newspapers, of no political importance whatever, viz. the *Novaia Rus* (New Russia) and *Zhivoye Slovo* (Living Word), and Burtzeff's *Obstcheye Delo* (The Common Cause). He placed them on a level with the Bolshevist papers *Soldat* and *Rabotchi Put* (The Workman's Way), which published direct calls to insurrection,

and gave their support to overt preparations for the latter.

Kerensky quoted extracts from Lenin's article, "Letters to Comrades," in the *Rabotchi Put*, where "this State criminal Lenin called upon the Petrograd proletariat and troops to repeat the experiment of the 16th–18th July." One of Lenin's articles concluded with the following ironical words: "What are you going to wait for? For a miracle? Are you going to wait for the Constituent Assembly? Wait and starve! Kerensky has promised you to convene the Constituent Assembly!"

At political meetings the audience was also incited to open rebellion. The campaign was carried on principally by Bronstein-Trotsky. "But," says Kerensky, "I must point out an exceedingly important thing, namely, the very definite, obvious, and inseparable connection between the attacks made by both wings." The articles in the *Rabotchi Put* and the *Soldat* are similar in style and turns of phrases with those in *Novaia Rus*.

Thus Kerensky placed on the same level the Bolsheviks, strong in their nearness to the masses, and the small group of people, without either political power or party to back them, who wrote for the *Novaia Rus*. Even on the eve of ruin, when the armed Bolsheviks were already advancing against him from the left, Kerensky was still timidly expecting an attack from the right.

He made a further quotation from Lenin's article: "Having scores of newspapers, freedom of meetings, having a majority in the Soviet, we—the international proletariat who hold the best position in the world—can we refuse to support the German revolutionaries and insurgent organisations?" Kerensky begged his audience to notice: "It is of great importance to me

that this should be noticed, that the organisers of the insurrection themselves acknowledge that the political conditions for the free activity of all parties are at present most advanced in Russia, under the present Provisional Government." Those who organise an insurrection in such a free country " are not assisting the proletariat of Germany, but are aiding the ruling classes of Germany, are opening the front of the Russian State to the mailed fist of the Kaiser and his friends. The action of the party which is doing this either consciously or unconsciously I declare to be treachery and treason to the Russian State." Kerensky reminds them that there are only three weeks left to the elections to the Constituent Assembly. The Government is preparing to hand over the land to the Land Committees " temporarily, until the Constituent Assembly." The Government is sending delegates to the Paris Conference, in order to " draw the attention of the Allies to the question of the necessity for a decided and accurate definition of the aims and objects of the war, and questions in regard to the measures for bringing the war to an end, *i.e.* the question of peace."

Having enumerated all these proposals of the Government, Kerensky returns to the Bolsheviks. " They have already begun to carry out the insurrection, they have sent out orders to the troops not to obey the orders from Headquarters. The military authorities consider this action of the Revolutionary Headquarters as clearly criminal, and have demanded that this order should be annulled without any delay. But even here, though there was every reason to take immediate, decisive, and energetic measures, the military authorities, at my instigation, considered it necessary first to give the men an opportunity of becoming aware of their conscious or unconscious mistake (cries from the

Right: 'That is what's wrong!') and to give time for this mistake—if it be a mistake—to be rectified by them. We had to do this for another reason also, namely, because during the first twenty-four hours after this order had been issued, no practical consequences resulting therefrom were observed among the troops. In general, I prefer that the authorities should act more slowly, but, to make up for that, more surely, and, when requisite, more resolutely."

The Prime Minister then acknowledged that his expectations of the Bolsheviks showing hearty repentance were not justified. "At three o'clock in the morning an announcement was made to us (he did not state by whom) that the ultimatum of the military authorities had been accepted. Thus at 3 A.M. the organisers of the insurrection had been obliged to declare formally that they had committed an unlawful act, which they now repudiated (Milyukoff, from his seat: 'That is original!'). But—as I had expected, and was sure, from the whole preceding tactics of these men—this was a case of their usual delay and deliberate deceit (voices from the Right: 'At last you have learned that much!'). At the present time all periods of grace have expired, and still we do not see the declaration which should have been made in the regiments. On the contrary, there has been an unauthorised distribution of cartridges and arms, and likewise the troops have been called out twice to the assistance of these Revolutionary Headquarters. Thus, I am obliged to inform the Provisional Government that the actual attitude of a certain part of the population is that of open insurrection (cries from the Right: 'It has come!'). That is from the legal point of view, and I propose that a corresponding judicial investigation should be immediately begun (noise from the Left). It is like-

wise proposed to make the necessary arrests (protests from the Left). Yes, yes! Listen! Because at the present time, when the State is being ruined by treason, whether conscious or unconscious, the Provisional Government, myself included, would rather be killed and destroyed than betray the life, the honour, and independence of the State." These words raised a storm of applause in the whole meeting, with the exception of the Left group. Kerensky continued: "The Provisional Government may be reproached for its weakness and excessive patience, but at any rate no one has the right to say that the Provisional Government, while I have been at its head, aye, and even before, has had recourse to any measures of coercion before immediate danger and ruin threatened the State." He reminded his auditors that the Government considered it their duty to strengthen the cause of freedom, that they "never infringed the complete freedom in the enjoyment of political rights by the citizens of the Russian State." This gives him the right "to demand that the country should support our decisive measures." This support had already been promised him from the front. The general Army Committees at Headquarters promised to support the authorities in their struggle against the destroyers of the State, and declared that the army "demands that the Provisional Government, in agreement with the Council of the Republic and the All-Russian Central Committee of the Soviets, should immediately and universally stop the wild military pogroms in towns and villages, and calls upon it to suppress all rioting resolutely and energetically."

No sooner had Kerensky read this resolution than the Minister, A. Konovaloff, handed him some kind of document. This was an Order of the Military Revolu-

tionary Committee to the effect that the Petrograd Soviet was in danger, that the troops must prepare for action, and wait for orders. The Order bore two signatures—Podvoisky and Antonoff.

As a lawyer, Kerensky first of all estimated this document from a criminal point of view, and only then drew his political conclusions from it. He read it aloud and said: "So, at the present time, the state of affairs in the capital is one which the law and the judicial authorities term a state of insurrection. It is an attempt to raise the rabble against the existing order, to prevent the Constituent Assembly being convened, and to open out the front to the serried ranks of the mailed fist of the Kaiser."

The word "rabble" raised a storm of protest from the Left, but Kerensky repeated it: "I say it deliberately—rabble—because the whole of intelligent Democracy and its Central Executive Committee, all army organisations, all that free Russia is proud of, and should be proud of—the reason, the conscience, and honour of the great Russian Democracy—all protest against this."

He concluded his speech with the demand that the Council should support the Government.

This was Kerensky's swan song. Into it he put all his wisdom, as a statesman, a Premier, and Commander-in-Chief, or rather, he betrayed all his blindness.

One great excuse for him is that he was not the only one who did not understand the interdependence of political forces and the psychology of the masses. At the same sitting another member of the Cabinet, Gvozdeff, Minister of Labour and Social-Democrat, declared: "I have been a workman for twenty years, and I think I have some right to speak in the name of Revolutionary Democracy. I assert that the Petrograd

workmen are incapable of organising a pogrom, and an insurrection leads to nothing else. In what has been said here, to wit, that the Government does not possess the confidence of the people (this was said by Kamkoff, the Social-Revolutionary), I see a libel on the intelligence of the people. I have never curried favour with any one. I only speak of what is true, and am convinced that intelligent workmen will take no part in the present movement." Gvozdeff demands that the question should be put squarely: "Either you are with Trotsky, or against him."

But he did not manage to get this clearly stated, neither by his comrades the Social-Democrats, nor the Social-Revolutionaries. The Left motion is so characteristic that I quote it *in extenso*, the more so as it was the last political act of Revolutionary Democracy.

The attempt at insurrection, for which preparations have lately been made, and which has for its object the seizure of power, threatens to cause civil war, creates conditions favourable to pogroms and the mobilisation of Black-gang counter-revolutionary forces, and will inevitably lead to the Constituent Assembly not being convened, to a new military catastrophe and the fall of the Revolution, accompanied by economic paralysis and the complete ruin of the country. The ground for the success of this agitation has been prepared not only by the objective conditions of war and disorganisation, but likewise by the delay in carrying out urgent measures, and therefore it is first of all necessary that a decree should immediately be passed for the transference of the land to the jurisdiction of the Land Committees, and that decisive action be taken in our foreign policy, with a proposal to the Allies to announce the conditions on which peace might be concluded, and to start peace negotiations. In order to fight against active outbursts of anarchy and pogroms it is necessary to take immediate measures to liquidate them, and for this purpose a Committee of Public Safety should be formed in Petrograd, consisting of representatives of the

municipal corporation and of Revolutionary-Democratic institutions, acting in concert with the Provisional Government.

In this Left motion there was no repudiation of Trotsky, but only an indirect condemnation of the Bolsheviks, and the liquidation of the insurrection was to be entrusted, not to the Government, but to a new committee, which was yet to be formed.

The second motion was proposed by the Cadets, Co-operators, and the Right Centre in general.

The Provisional Council of the Russian Republic, having heard the communication of the Prime Minister, declares that in the struggle against the traitors to the country and the cause of the Revolution, who, before the face of the enemy, and on the eve of the Constituent Assembly, have had recourse to the organisation of open rebellion in the capital, the Council will give its full support to the Government, and demands that the most resolute measures be taken for the suppression of the rebellion.

The Cossacks likewise seconded this motion. But, before voting, they made a separate declaration, full of harsh accusations both against "all open and secret Zimmerwaldists, those criminals and traitors," and against the Government.

The Provisional Government, having proved its failure to act in regard to the events of the 3rd–5th of July, and shown its utter weakness of authority after these events, and inaction in the face of events that are now about to take place, is thereby guilty of collusion with the Bolsheviks. In view of the aforesaid, and not wishing to shed Cossack blood, as was the case on the 3rd–5th of July, and not being assured that the Provisional Government has really decided to finish with the Bolshevist movement and to free its policy from the influence of the Zimmerwaldists, the Cossack Section announces that the Cossacks are ready to do their duty to their country and to Liberty, but demand guarantees from the Government that no favour will be shown to the Bolsheviks.

This sounded like a threat, as all were aware that Kerensky reckoned very much on the Cossack forces, which nevertheless did not prevent him a few days before the rebellion from prohibiting an intended Cossack church procession. The Cossacks paid no attention to the prohibition, but the irritation among them was growing, and Kerensky paid dearly for it.

When the motions were put to the vote, the Socialist motion was supported by 123 votes, while the Cadets only got 102, twenty-six members having abstained from voting. Kerensky did not retain the confidence of the majority. Even this stake he lost.

Among those who had abstained from voting were the Populist Socialists, some of the Co-operators, Vera Figner, and N. Chaikovsky. At that decisive moment these old revolutionaries could not muster up their courage to take either one side or another definitely, but silently stepped aside.

While the Council of the Republic was engrossed in passing motions, firing had already commenced in the streets, and ominous motor-cars with machine-guns and rifles had begun to appear.

# CHAPTER XI

## THE NOVEMBER REVOLUTION

The General Staff and the Winter Palace—Arrest of members of the Provisional Government—Adventure or *coup d'état* ?—No defenders —Kerensky disappears—The Petrograd Municipal Council as the centre of opposition—The Military Cadets—The Moscow fighting—Strike of officials—Seizure of the State Bank—Union of Unions—Impotence of the intelligentsia.

THE Bolsheviks opened military operations on the 6th of November. On the night of the 6–7th, the Military Revolutionary Committee occupied the railway stations. The orders of the district staff were with great difficulty transmitted, as the exchanges were seized by Bolshevist soldiers, and even when transmitted were not obeyed. The cruisers *Aurora* and *Zaria Svobody* with two torpedo-boats had come up from Cronstadt. Several Bolsheviks still remaining in prison were liberated by order of the Military Revolutionary Committee. The Governor of the prison had some doubts as to whether he should obey the order, but the soldiers of the Volynsky Regiment, who were on guard, rang up their regimental committee and received the command to obey the Military Revolutionary Committee.

The revolt, of which the true dimensions were realised by very few,[1] was beginning to develop into an actual revolution.

[1] A. Shingareff, a clever and observant man, wrote in the *Russkija Viedomosty*, on the 6th November: "Will the Bolsheviks come out or not ? Personally, I believe that the whole thing will be limited to empty rhodomontade and political blackmailing by cowardly rioters and obscure demagogues."

The Bolsheviks were distributing to these workmen arms which had not been confiscated after the July revolt. A Red Guard, advocated long ago by the very first Executive Committee, was being organised. On the 7th November, Petrograd was already in the hands of the rebels. In the afternoon soldiers and sailors surrounded the Marie Palace; armoured cars drove up. An officer transmitted the order of the Military Revolutionary Committee that the members of the Council of the Republic should quit the Palace. The President of the Council of the Republic, Avksentieff, communicated the order to the assembled members. There were very few of them—barely a hundred (out of 800)—yet even here was discord. The Right wing, headed by the Cadets, was of opinion that they ought not to submit to the demand, but the majority decided to withdraw under protest, and yield to force.

Upon the same day the Military Revolutionary Committee declared in a special proclamation:

> The Provisional Government is deposed. All State power has passed into the hands of the Petrograd Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, *i.e.* to a Military Revolutionary Committee placed at the head of the Petrograd garrison and proletariat. The goal for which the people fought, the immediate proposal of a democratic peace, the abolition of private landed property, Labour control of industry, the establishment of a Soviet Government—all this is guaranteed.

Thus seven months after his arrival in Russia did Lenin once again repeat his long-standing programme; but it was no longer the abstract speech of a propagandist. It was the programme of a Government in formation. Only a small band of men, bearing the sonorous and dangerous title of Ministers of the Provisional Government, stood between him and power. But the man who had been able to enlist the sympathies

of the workers and soldier masses found no difficulty in despatching them once for all.

In the afternoon of the 7th of November, Kerensky, with his assistant Kuzminsky, left Petrograd in a motor-car, as was generally thought for the front.[1] Konovaloff remained as his substitute, while N. M. Kishkin was invested "with extraordinary power for re-establishing order in the capital." In other words, he was made Dictator. But he lacked the main attribute of a dictator —military force. A company of Cadets from the artillery school marched to the Winter Palace and went away again. Later came a small detachment of Cadets from other military schools. A company of 135 women-soldiers of the Women's Battalion was also quartered in the Palace. None of the other military units came to defend the Government.

P. Arzubieff gives the following narrative of what was going on at the Staff and in the Winter Palace during the night of 6–7th November. This talented and trustworthy journalist had spent a long time at the front, and had known the meaning of war, had known the Russian Army in the days of its brave fighting. As a correspondent he had accompanied Kerensky in his visits to the front, and was a witness of his frantic efforts to substitute eloquence for compulsion. Arzubieff's career as a military correspondent ended with the last hours of the old Russian Army's existence.

According to Arzubieff, on the eve of the rising the Intelligence Department of the General Staff had been receiving the most contradictory reports. Some said

[1] I am obliged to compile the narrative of the first days of the *coup d'état* from brief newspaper extracts prepared while I was still in Russia. Hence mistakes are possible. I apologize beforehand to my readers, as I have nothing else to go upon, and I was not an eye-witness of these events. I returned to Petrograd from the Caucasus four days after the *coup d'état*.

that Government troops formed an overwhelming majority. Those who were more observant pointed out that there was unrest in the barracks, that various obscure persons were persuading the soldiers that if they held aloof and did not come out to fight against the Ministers they would suffer for it later on.

"Next day (it was the 7th of November, the day of Kerensky's departure) the magic words flew throughout 'bourgeois' Petrograd: 'It has come.'

"It was the beginning of that long-expected something, whose coming was awaited with fear or hope by the inmates of Petrograd, by soldiers, by workmen in the factories, by women in the queues, by all, in fact, with the exception of the plenipotentiary leaders of the Revolutionary Democracy and the members of the Provisional Government.

"Neither of them apparently believed in the Bolshevist peril, and now that it had at last burst upon them they completely lost their heads. Bolshevist patrols occupied the State Bank and the Telephone Exchange. The Peter and Paul Fortress was also in their hands. The Council of the Republic was dispersed. Patrols of the Pavlovsky Regiment appeared in the afternoon upon the Nevsky Prospect and began to verify the officers' passports.

"A feeling of unconcealed fear and the consciousness of pitiful helplessness pervaded the Intelligence Department. . . .

"I resolved to go to the Winter Palace. Had not Kerensky, in the name of the Provisional Government, declared their decision to die at their post. . . .

"The Winter Palace was empty. Scared couriers huddled together in corners, fearfully awaiting the coming of new masters. Journalists, the chorus of all contemporary historical tragedies, were chatting volubly

in one of the apartments. A short distance away, in the large hall, Ministers roamed about in solitary state.

"No one paid any attention to the Ministers, no one came to take their orders. Every one abandoned them in the moment of danger, just as eight months before every one had abandoned Nicholas II. Had the troops of the Military Revolutionary Committee appeared at once, they might have arrested the entire united Cabinet without firing a single shot.

"Delegates of the 14th Don Cossack Regiment appeared at last. Apparently this regiment could be relied upon. Therefore the Government could dispose of the Cadets, the women's shock battalion, and several hundreds of Cossacks. They also possessed six guns, and two or three armoured cars also remained. Not a bad beginning. The suppression of the revolt of the 17th July had been undertaken with, perhaps, fewer forces."

But some kind of authority for giving orders was needed even over six guns. Yet upon that fatal day the attentive observer could trace no authority either in the Palace or at the Staff, whither he again retraced his steps. N. Kishkin, seeing the inactivity of the Military Authorities, dismissed a colonel and at once named General Bagratuny as his successor.

"Bagratuny never dreamed of giving orders or of organising a defence were it only with the troops at his disposal. What was the meaning of it? Was it a premeditated strike or a paralysis of will to act in the face of danger? It was the fatal consequence of the system established in the army by Kerensky, which resulted in all posts of the higher command being occupied by men of weak character, devoid of firm principles and moral courage, ready to bow down to force whatever its origin. Yet surely we had strong

men among our soldiers, men of another caste, whose character had been steeled amid the hardships of war and in the stern school of former military service! Where were they?

"One of these men arrived at the Staff. It was General Alexeieff. Officers, privates, even the brazen Staff clerks, stood at attention before him. For one lightning moment the fascination of glory and authority, the old half-forgotten hypnotism of military discipline, pervaded that distracted, timid crowd. Alexeieff passed rapidly into Kishkin's apartment, stayed there for a quarter of an hour, went out again, addressed a few kindly, encouraging words to the officers who clustered round him, and walked downstairs.

"I do not know the reason of Alexeieff's visit. Forgetting all former offences, deceits and injustice, did he wish to offer his assistance to the perishing Government? If such was the case his offer was apparently rejected, and the man who alone might perhaps have saved a cause obviously doomed to perdition, once more departed rejected and misunderstood. His departure served as a signal for a general stampede. Officers who had presented themselves at the Staff of their own free will, dispersed. Clerks began to disappear, and so did even some of the officers occupying permanent posts at the Staff. The vast reception-rooms became empty.

"Four armoured cars drove up to the Palace Square. (The Staff Headquarters occupied one side of it, and the Winter Palace the other.) These were already Bolshevist armoured cars. The enemy was preparing for assault, yet no one seemed to be thinking of defence. Not a shot was fired. After standing for a while before the Palace, the armoured cars turned back."

In one of the streets leading to the Palace, Arzubieff overheard a conversation between a small platoon of a shock battalion, which defended the Government, and two soldiers delegated from the fortress with an ultimatum to the Ministers to surrender within a space of twenty minutes, as otherwise the fortress guns would open fire.

The journalist offered to take these messengers to the Staff, and on the way began to test the firmness of the "delegate comrades."

"Do you imagine there are no guns in the Palace? They have mine-throwers, and bomb-throwers, and all kinds of machines. You will be smashed to smithereens."

"We ourselves know that we can't hold out, but what could we do? They've sent us, and so we-went. It's the majority that decides, we only follow suit."

"Well," thought I, "what sort of people are in the fortress I do not know—but the delegates are no good."

Yet General Bagratuny, to whom they presented their ultimatum, was equally useless. The Cadets, the shock troops, the officers who were ready to fight for the Government, received no orders and could not even make out whether the Government intended to defend itself or to surrender!

"General," said N. Kishkin, in a loud voice, "I command you to resist the rebels."

The General smiled. But the smile was not a merry one. He answered gently:

"I have been accustomed, sir, as a soldier, to weigh the circumstances. To my mind the actual circumstances present no data for offering resistance."

"As a soldier it is your duty to die when ordered to do so!"

"Yes, of course; still the actual circumstances. . . ."

Kishkin decided that there was nothing to hope from the Staff, and returned to the Winter Palace, where all the other Ministers were also assembled. They were all able to escape, but regarded such an act as unworthy of members of the Provisional Government, and confronted the peril bravely. A. Konovaloff, N. Kishkin, M. Tereschenko, N. Smirnoff, Tretyakoff, Palchinsky, Rutenberg, Gvozdeff, Nikitin, Liverovsky, Masloff, M. Bernatsky, A. Kartasheff—all assembled in the Palace, now transformed into a besieged fortress, only without defenders. A few hundred Cadets, who had no cartridges for their rifles, and the Women's Company could not be counted as a serious defensive force.

The women-soldiers found themselves in the Palace by accident. On the 5th of November, the day before the Bolshevist rising, Kerensky had held a review of the Women's Battalion. The women were certain that after the review they would be immediately sent to the front. They were full of burning zeal to fight the Germans, and did not in the least realise what was going on around them. Great was their disappointment when they were ordered to return to their barracks. After the review was over some one proposed to Kerensky to keep the battalion at the Palace. The commander of the battalion refused, but told off one company of 135 women-privates to guard the motor-cars which fetched benzine from the stores where the workmen were on strike. So that when the Reds commenced the siege of the Palace, the Women's Company, to its amazement and indignation, found itself drawn into the civil war. They had trained themselves to fight the Germans, but had not the slightest desire to be mixed up in political conflicts. The story of the

Women's Company furnished another proof of the childish inefficiency of Generalissimo Kerensky, incapable even of organising the defence of the Palace, much less of Russia. As a member of the Petrograd Municipal Council I made an inquiry concerning the position of the Women's Battalion after the *coup d'état*, and both officers and women-privates spoke to me with equal indignation of how they had been drawn into a struggle the meaning of which they did not even understand.

The Winter Palace was quite unprepared for defence. There was no trace of those mine- and bomb-throwers with which Arzubieff had tried to intimidate the delegates from the fortress. There were no arms, no cartridges, not even bread for the defenders. The members of the Government assembled in the Palace had not the slightest possibility of defending themselves. No one came to their assistance—neither workmen nor soldiers.

Only civilians in the Town Hall listened excitedly to the speeches of the deposed leaders of the first Soviet, who had come to seek aid for Kerensky and his adherents and called upon the members to die for the Provisional Government. Members of the Municipal Council answered with enthusiastic promises, and even marched demonstratively towards the Palace, naïvely believing that having been elected by universal suffrage, their authority would be recognised by the people. But the mob had no respect whatever for any lawful authorities, albeit it had formerly voted for them. The members of the Municipal Council soon realised this. The first sentinels they came across barred the way. They tried to persuade them, but the soldiers did not give in. Whereupon the whole procession returned to the Town Hall, where, in accordance with a receipt prescribed by the Socialistic wing of the Council of the Republic, a "Committee of Public

Safety" was organised, whose first act consisted in a declaration that "The question regarding the situation of the Government remains an open one." These words concealed an ambiguous expectation of a new master. His coming was at hand.

Petrograd did not sleep that night—listening to the firing, to the rattle of machine-guns, to the boom of the fortress guns. The capital was transformed into a battlefield whose centre lay around the former Palace of the Tsars. The streets swarmed with excited crowds, armoured cars rushed up and down, horsemen galloped past, armed patrols warmed themselves round bonfires. One might have thought that the Russian capital was preparing for a battle against the Germans. In reality it was but the beginning of a class-war which was destined to last for months.

The crowd of soldiers, workmen, women, and common street rabble, which surged around the Winter Palace, stormed in, meeting with scarcely any resistance. The assailants possessed artillery, machine-guns, shells, and cartridges. The defenders were not only few in numbers, but almost unarmed.

In spite of the deafening firing, there were not many victims. The Women's Battalion suffered no casualties. The women-soldiers said to me afterwards with a contemptuous smile: "As if the Red Guards are soldiers! They do not know how to hold a rifle; they can't even handle a machine-gun."

Most of the bullets did indeed fly high over the people's heads. Although in the square soldiers joined the Red Guards, perhaps they took no pains to shoot properly. Soldiers of the Kexholm Regiment, which was supposed to be a special bulwark of Bolshevism, said afterwards that they had been ordered to leave the barracks in the morning without being told where and

for what purpose they were led out.[1] Only upon finding themselves in front of the Winter Palace at nightfall did they realise the true state of affairs. But even soldiers who were out of sympathy with the movement had no means of escape, for they were intermixed with the Red Guards, who, although they did not know the use of firearms, were full of neophyte zeal.

The consciousness of their own wrongdoing still felt by some of the soldiers may, perhaps, explain the reason why the Ministers were not mishandled by the mob. Fortunately for them, Kerensky, against whom the Bolsheviks had aroused the blind hatred of the masses, was not present when the furious mob stormed the Winter Palace. Everything was plundered, broken, and destroyed—even the hospital occupied by wounded soldiers. What could not be taken away was smashed to atoms. It seemed as if a horde of savages had swept the vast Palace which since the March Revolution had belonged to the nation. The crowd was so dense that not all could join in the delight of taking part in the plunder and destruction. Numbers remained outside. Furious, savage shouts greeted the appearance of the arrested Ministers.

A. V. Kartasheff, the Minister of Public Worship, told me later that when they were being led from the Winter Palace to the Fortress of SS. Peter and Paul, he could feel the "dark waves of hatred" rising on all sides from the howling, infuriated mob. Every moment he expected these waves to break the thin chain of the convoy which closely encircled the arrested Ministers. Each time, when these waves dashed too closely, they were saved by the presence of mind of the soldiers, who, lowering their bayonets, started almost at a run to

[1] I repeat this from the statement made by the Esthonian representative in London, Prof. A. Piip, who had it from Esthonian soldiers.

escape the infuriated mob ready to seize its victims. I heard the same story from the Cadets and women-soldiers who were taken prisoners at the Palace. They were all saved from lynching by the Bolshevist soldiers themselves, *i.e.* by soldiers who considered themselves Bolsheviks although probably realising neither the meaning of Bolshevism nor its consequences.

When, after having been set at liberty, A. V. Kartasheff, an idealist, a man of great spiritual power and full of the moral courage inseparable from true religious sentiment, lived over again those dark hours, he frankly admitted to me: "I felt the agony of a man dying slowly at the stake."

Another chance incident helped to save them. On their way to the fortress they had to cross the Neva Bridge. Suddenly, as they were crossing the bridge, arrested Ministers, military convoy, the frenzied crowd —all came under a volley of rifle-fire. No one knew where the shots came from, but in trying to escape from this common deadly peril, every one flung themselves prone on the road, and lay there for several minutes while the bullets whizzed over their heads. This cooled down the victors. The soldiers were the first to jump up, and together with the Ministers reached the fortress at a brisk trot.

When the gates closed upon them, both the prisoners and the convoy heaved a sigh of relief. The people had proved more terrible than the gaolers.

Here is a description of Petrograd's state of mind on the morrow of the *coup d'état* (8th November), given by a capable journalist, a non-party Socialist, S. Kondurushkin.

"This morning Petrograd is almost empty. The people, terrified by the all-night bombardment, are afraid to venture into the street. All Government offices are closed. The Winter

Palace is occupied by the rebels. The Tsar's garden is strewn with the bodies of those who were killed in the night. The treasures of the Winter Palace have been plundered. The Ministers are arrested and imprisoned in the fortress.

"How Maklakoff, Khvostoff, Sukhomlinoff (the Tsarist Ministers imprisoned in the fortress) must laugh! Welcome, the fresh party of traitors to the State! Even Socialism has failed to save the Ministers.

"Guns are placed on the Nevsky Prospect. Patrols occupy street corners, bonfires are made of bourgeois papers (confiscated from newsboys), and soldiers and street urchins are warming themselves around them. Lorries, bristling with machine-guns and crowded with soldiers and sailors, tear along the empty streets towards the railway stations. Those are the rebels hastening to meet the Government troops. Their faces are radiant; they are convinced that they are making the Revolution and saving their country.

"Towards evening the streets are filled with silent people. At first sight these seem to be the same as in March, but look at their faces—it is as if there was death in their homes. Those other days had been full of enthusiasm, many believed in the speedy coming of a new era. Now all faces are sullen and melancholy. Only men with rifles are enthusiastic; what strong and well-fed fellows they are, these Petrograd soldiers and sailors! I might even add, what blockheads!"

These were already the new masters. The power of the Revolutionary Democracy and of the Provisional Government which leaned upon it was at an end. They had been animated by a sincere desire to serve the people, but they were too weak, too dogmatical, and paid for their weakness, not only with the cruel price of humiliation and suffering, but maybe by losing faith in the very people whose servants the Ministers considered themselves to be.

The political March Revolution, which deposed autocracy, avoided all violent measures even against the most hated representatives of the old régime, begin-

ning with Nicholas II. himself. In the early days of the March Revolution each time that evil sparks of hatred and revenge flamed up among the mob Kerensky boldly quenched them. He would not suffer the Ministers, not even Sukhomlinoff, to be lynched.

The November Revolution, which overthrew the Democratic Government, followed another course—the course of violence and bloodshed. The short era of Russian political liberty was over. In its stead came the gloomy period of enforced communism, and step by step Russia began to relapse into the most terrible experiences of the Middle Ages.

This catastrophic change did not become immediately apparent. Although the Provisional Government was under arrest, and Lenin and Trotsky, surrounded at Smolny with machine-guns and with artillery, issued one decree after another in the name of the new Government of workmen and peasants, no one believed such a state of affairs would last. Their orders were so absurd, the Red Guards and Bolshevist Committee-men were so unlike ordinary Government agents that public opinion was certain all this was not a *coup d'état*, but merely a passing adventure. The Bolsheviks themselves frankly admitted that they would not hold out for more than a fortnight.

Besides, where was the possibility of judging the situation, when neither the Bolsheviks nor their opponents had any idea of what was going on, not only in Russia, but even in Petrograd itself?

In his diary, dated the 9th November, S. Kondurushkin gave an interesting description of Smolny—the Bolshevist citadel.

"It would be curious to have a look at what is going on at Bolshevist Headquarters at the Smolny Institute!

"The vast court of the old Elizabethan building is crowded with dozens of motor-cars. For seven months Tsereteli, Chheidze, Skobeleff, Gotz, Lieber, Dan, have driven in those motor-cars. . . . Now they are taken up by Lenin, Trotsky, Bronstein, Kollontai, Kameneff-Rozenfeldt, Zinovieff-Apfelbaum. . . . What a pleiad!

"Will the Motherland shortly witness a new constellation rising in our political spheres?

"Between the entrance-pillars a large machine-gun points its muzzle at the doorway. Several groups of armed guards—all is enthusiasm and bayonets!

"On the ground-floor I receive a pass for going upstairs. I mount. I roam over the marble stairs, along the wide corridors. For a century and a half this had been women's intimate domain. Gentle maidens, in snow-white pinafores and modest gowns, had paced the polished floors of these halls and corridors. Now they are crowded with soldiers and sailors, trampling the refuse and mud with their heavy boots. Party-girls are seated at tables selling papers and pamphlets. Smoke, dust, evil smells, cigarette-ends. . . .

"The authorities occupy the apartments. Long queues of soldiers with papers and letters await their turn at the door; dark-complexioned, nimble little men run in and out, the crowd winds up around them.

". . . All right! Very good! Yes, yes! Oh, do leave me in peace, I've not slept three nights . . .

"Kerensky's troops are approaching Petrograd. Smolny is agitated. Motor-horns sound at the gates; soldiers and sailors are hastily running up and down stairs.

"I glance over the piles of books lying on the table and buy a few. At home in the evening I look through them. Surely these are the ravings of a madman, but not literature!

"Excitement, frenzy, torrents of meaningless words, threats, and delirious visions of some new unknown life. But not a trace of consciousness of the actual Russia. A madman's ravings are also consecutive and full of fiery vividness, but because of their absence of connection with reality they are nevertheless only ravings.

"We, in Petrograd, are cut off from all the world. Of what is

happening in Russia or abroad we know nothing. Perhaps we in Petrograd have all gone mad already!"

Such an idea occurred to many of us in those days, so difficult was it to obtain a clear understanding of what was really happening in this whirl of events and rumours. Authentic news was also hard to obtain. Bolshevist papers lied as usual, all others were suppressed. Sailors and Red Guards broke into printing-offices and, with levelled bayonets, dispersed both printers and members of the staff. Wild rumours spread over the city. The Town Hall became the only centre of anti-Bolshevist political life and public defence. Every evening meetings were held, which received often contradictory and confused reports of all that had taken place in the city, of the shooting of the Cadets, of arrests and looting, of negotiations with Smolny, of some obscure political vacillations at Headquarters. All this sounded feverish, uncertain, distracted.

Kerensky was expected to bring over troops and overthrow the Bolsheviks. Small bands of Cadets, acting without plan or unity, fought against the Bolsheviks, who dealt with them as cruelly as only men who are a prey to the frenzy of civil war can deal. Hundreds of young men were flung into the fortress or into prison. Relatives in despair rushed from place to place searching for their near and dear among corpses in the mortuaries, among the drowned cast up by the Neva and its adjacent canals, among the prisoners whose lists no one knew.

And still the troops of the Provisional Government did not arrive. Only later it became known that no such troops actually existed. The few units which might perhaps have been persuaded to advance against the Bolsheviks could not be moved to Petrograd owing

to the extremely ambiguous, half-Bolshevist attitude taken up by the Central Executive Committee of the Railway Union, the so-called Vikzhel. Under pretext of putting an end to the civil war the Vikzhel forbade the transit of anti-Bolshevist units, while allowing Bolshevist troops to travel.

The Bolsheviks themselves, after proclaiming themselves a Government, did not know what forces were at Kerensky's disposal. Trotsky, then merely President of the Petrograd Soviet, ordered trenches to be dug around the city "against Kerensky's Korniloff bands." Skirmishes were taking place around Petrograd at Krasnoe-Selo, Gatchina, and Tsarskoe. No one knew their results. In Petrograd itself there was no organised military resistance. The youthful heroism of the Cadets was of no importance whatever. The military situation became clear five days after the occupation of the Winter Palace. The *Pravda* published on the 14th of November a statement of General Krasnoff, signed by him, in which he reported his last conversation with the Commander-in-Chief. Kerensky was very nervous and excited.

"General, you have betrayed me," said Kerensky. "Your Cossacks say that they will arrest and deliver me to the sailors."

"Yes," replied Krasnoff, "such talk is current ; I know there is no sympathy for you anywhere."

"But the officers also say the same."

"The officers are also dissatisfied with you."

"What am I to do ? Am I to commit suicide ? "

General Krasnoff proposed that Kerensky should go to Petrograd carrying a white flag and enter into negotiations with the military revolutionary staff. Kerensky apparently acquiesced and asked for a guard, but while the general was assembling the convoy the Commander-in-Chief disappeared.

In such terms did the Cossack General, clearly ill-disposed towards Kerensky, describe the last moments spent by the ill-starred Commander-in-Chief in the midst of his handful of supporters. It is difficult to define precisely what had taken place at Gatchina, but it is certain that Kerensky had no military supporters and found himself obliged to cling to a few hundred Cossacks (of whom there were not more than 1500). Moreover, the Cossacks had for a long time been antagonistic towards him, while Kerensky himself mistrusted them, suspecting them of counter-revolutionary leanings. Besides this, the Cossacks had no desire to fight against superior forces of Red Guards. They began to fraternise and ended the battle, or rather the slight skirmish, by a peace treaty which guaranteed them a safe return to their homes. Under such conditions Kerensky's sojourn among them became very dangerous, because he was confronted by a foe who did not even spare peaceful citizens. When the Cossacks retreated from Tsarkoe Selo the Red Guards raided the dainty little town and proceeded to lay down the law. The priests in the churches were at that time offering prayers for "the cessation of fratricidal war." One of them, Father John Kochuroff, was dragged out of the church for that prayer and shot before the eyes of his schoolboy son.

With the disappearance of Kerensky the Petrograd military operations came to an end. No aid was forthcoming from Headquarters, for there too no one knew what to do. The Chief of the Staff, Dukhonin, assumed the post of Supreme Commander-in-Chief on the 14th November in view of General Krasnoff's report that Commander-in-Chief Kerensky had abandoned the detachment and his present abode was unknown. General Dukhonin ordered no more troops to be sent to Petrograd, more especially as "negotiations are in progress between

political parties concerning the formation of a Provisional Government. In anticipation of the solution of the crisis, I summon the troops calmly to fulfil their duty in order to prevent any further German advance."

Such was the end of Kerensky's military career. He did not even risk going to Headquarters to seek support from there. Who, indeed, could have given it? After the arrest of Korniloff and other Generals, the authority of Headquarters was already broken.

Negotiations concerning the formation of a Government were actually taking place. Part of the Socialistic Centre dreamed of creating a Coalition Ministry of members of all Socialistic parties, including the Bolsheviks. But the parties, themselves split up into numerous factions, could arrive at no agreement upon the subject. One faction of the Mensheviks desired an agreement. Another was opposed to it. A sharp cleavage took place in the Social-Revolutionary party. Social-Revolutionaries of the Left were acting in accord with the Bolsheviks. Those of the Right supported Kerensky and were consequently antagonists of the Bolsheviks. The Centre, led by Chernoff, denounced the Military Revolutionary Committee, but sought for an understanding with Smolny. The Bolsheviks put an end to both vacillations and hopes, by adopting the resolution that the Central Executive Committee, which was entirely in their hands, " was the only source of authority." This resolution finally set aside all those very Socialists who had persisted with such enduring and touching fidelity in treating the Bolsheviks as their " comrades-in-ideas."

Even the Internationalists, that intermediate faction of the Social Democrats which from the first days of the Revolution had professed the same ideas as the Bolsheviks, expressed their indignation.

They withdrew from the Central Executive Com-

mittee, declaring as their motive that the Bolshevist resolution was "a challenge to all parties. . . . Responsibility for the prolongation of the civil war falls upon the Bolsheviks."

The breach was soon healed. They became reconciled and remained in the Soviets, occasionally allowing themselves the luxury of criticism.

In acute opposition to the Bolsheviks stood all the State Socialists, Plekhanoff's group, the Populist Socialists, a faction of the Social-Revolutionaries. In this they were at one with the Cadets, who adopted an irreconcilable attitude. Notwithstanding the firing in the streets, the constant domiciliary visits, arrests, and menaces, the Cadet party never ceased openly and determinedly to denounce the Bolsheviks at various meetings and in the Municipal Council. The leader of the party, P. Milyukoff, was absent from Petrograd. The central figure of the conflict became A. Y. Shingareff, one of the most popular Cadet leaders. A doctor by profession, a man of enormous capacity for work and chivalrous devotion to duty, he was respected and admired not only by his numerous adherents, but also by opponents. Enemies he had none. Modest, straightforward, gentle, although sternly inexorable in questions of moral principle, he was a typical Russian democrat, both in private life and in his ideas. His name was familiar to all reading Russia. He was thrice elected to the Duma, was a member of Prince G. Lvoff's Cabinet, first as Minister of Agriculture, later as Minister of Finance. At the same time he remained member of the Petrograd Municipal Council, and after the November Revolution took advantage of his position to lead a daring anti-Bolshevist campaign from the platform of the Town Hall. His speeches had an enormous influence upon the Municipal Council, and rendered any com-

promise with Smolny morally impossible to the Social-Revolutionary members. A. Y. Shingareff denied with harsh indignation all possibility of compliance with the Bolsheviks, whom he denounced as usurpers and criminals. "There may be fanatics and madmen in their midst," said he, "but there seem to be more *provocateurs* and members of the Okrana. . . . The Bolsheviks have an undoubted mixture of German spies"—and in confirmation of his statement he described a domiciliary visit at one of the women's organisations. "The Reds looted the premises, carried off clothes, money, valuables. They carried off everything they could lay their hands upon, but they left something behind. After they were gone a German mark was found upon the floor. Any attempt at an agreement with such people would be countenancing a crime. Those among you," he added, turning to the Socialists, "who think to put an end to bloodshed by peaceful methods of agreement, are greatly mistaken. You will achieve nothing, for they will not stop half-way in their struggle."

Shingareff demanded the restoration of the authority of the Provisional Government and the most energetic struggle against the Bolsheviks.

As I have said, during those November days the Petrograd Municipal Council was not only the sole existing political centre, besides the Smolny Institute, but also the only lawful body of representatives of the people. In this we could rival the Soviet. Elections to the Soviet were absolutely arbitrary, whereas the Municipal Council had been elected on the arch-democratic principle of universal or proportional representation. Various parties were represented as follows: 75 Social-Revolutionaries (205,000 votes), 67 Bolsheviks (183,000 votes), 42 Cadets (115,000 votes). The remaining 15 members represented various small Socialistic

groups, which altogether obtained only 35,000 votes out of the total of 530,000. The Bolsheviks were in an absolute minority. For this reason the Socialist members of the Municipal Council attempted to influence the population against the Bolsheviks. They motored to the factories, made speeches, put up posters, appealing to the reason, conscience, or even to the mere instinct of self-preservation of their electors. All was in vain. Popularity had flown from the Social-Revolutionaries. Their followers of yesterday now ran after the chariot of the conqueror, believing that Lenin and Trotsky would give them peace and bread, liberty and happiness.

The Bolsheviks did not at once realise the full scope of their influence. They thought themselves obliged at first to reckon with the Municipal Council, and did not risk employing those physical methods of compulsion which had enabled them to seize and retain power. After the *coup d'état* the Bolshevist members issued an appeal to the population, declaring the Municipal Council to be a bourgeois institution. "Instead of fulfilling their plain duties, the Social-Revolutionaries of the Right and the Cadets have transformed the Municipal Council into an arena of political strife against the Soviets, against the Revolutionary Government of peace, bread, and liberty." Then the Bolsheviks demonstratively left the Town Hall. Their seats remained empty. Only one or two Bolsheviks, obviously delegated for obtaining information, remained gloomily listening to the orators whose speeches usually denounced Bolshevist crimes.

The opposition of the Petrograd Municipal Council acted as a stimulant to the irreconcilable attitude adopted by the majority of the intelligentsia towards the Bolsheviks. But the Municipal Council was unable to engage in any active conflict against the armed usurpers.

On the night of the *coup d'état* a Committee of Public Safety had been organised in connection with the Municipal Council, comprising, besides members of the Council, representatives of various democratic organisations, such as the Central Executive Committee of Workmen's Deputies, the Peasants' Deputies, the Centro-Flot, the Army Committees, etc.

Amid the turmoil of civil war this Committee acted as a kind of Red Cross unit. Owing to its mixed composition, and partly thanks to the Social-Revolutionary and Internationalist members, the Municipal Council was able to render assistance, not only to the Women's Battalion, which found itself under the surveillance of the Red Guard, but also to the military Cadets. The Municipal Council obtained the release of hundreds of arrested Cadets, provided them with money, and helped them to leave Petrograd.

The Cadets were the last organised unit of the Russian Army. Being reliable soldiers, after the March Revolution they were chiefly employed to mount guard. At the time of the November Revolution they found themselves in respect of Kerensky in the position of the Swiss Guards of Versailles in the reign of Louis XVI. The officers were unorganised; whereas after all the Cadet schools constituted armed and disciplined military units. Their composition, as regards class and political sympathies, was extremely varied. Before the war the Cadet schools, which trained the future officers, were more or less caste institutions where free education was given to officers' sons. But after the terrible losses sustained by the officers' staff in the war the Cadet schools began to admit young men of very low educational standard as well as privates who had distinguished themselves in active service. Just before the Revolution these schools were filled with sons of peasants, artisans,

small shopkeepers, clerks, and had generally become absolutely democratic. This, however, did not prevent the Bolsheviks from declaring that all the Cadets were "the sons of landowners and capitalists."

This untruth was necessary to them for deepening class consciousness, or rather class-war. Even Gorky, who in many respects was very sympathetic to extreme Marxian tendencies, wrote an indignant protest in his paper. "It is, of course, an impudent lie to say that all the Cadets are landowners' sons, and as such are subject to extermination. It is a falsehood perpetrated by adventurers and frantic demagogues."

Yet this conscious falsehood, so persistently and variously repeated by the Bolsheviks, rendered the very name of "Cadet" odious to the masses. The Red Guards, and especially the soldiers who had joined them, were persuaded that they were fighting not against Kerensky or the Provisional Government, but against the Cadets. In Bolshevist language, the very word "Cadet" became a word of abuse; whereas people who clung to any hope of saving Russia from anarchy saw in these very Cadets the last mainstay of the crumbling State.

The Cadets, who had been training for war with Germany, were drawn by the force of events into the vortex of a far more terrible civil war. Among them were young men of various political convictions. Many were probably simply indifferent to politics; but being educated soldiers they remained more loyal to duty and their oath of allegiance. When the Bolsheviks set up the frenzied persecution of the Cadets they, too, naturally began to feel a fierce resentment against those who incited the mob against them. After the fighting at Petrograd and Moscow, numbers of Cadets, together with the officers, fled to the south to join General

Alexeieff. They preferred enlisting in the ranks of an army, even a Volunteer Army, to living under the constant menace of being lynched by soldiers or Red Guards.

At Moscow, the resistance to the Military Revolutionary Committee was infinitely better organised than the attempts at self-defence made by the Provisional Government at Petrograd.

The Moscow regional commander, Colonel Riaboff, shut himself up in the Kremlin with a detachment of officers, students, and Cadets. They possessed arms and even guns. The Municipal Council organised a Committee of Public Safety, which found itself in the very centre of the fighting, as the Town Hall is situated by the Kremlin. The Social-Revolutionaries, beginning with the Mayor (Mr. Rudneff), felt very uncertain. By force of habit they were on the side of the Reds, but were defended by the Whites, as the Bolsheviks had contemptuously nicknamed their opponents. The number of fighting-men was extremely insignificant on both sides. The majority of the workmen and the soldiers remained neutral and waited to see who would carry the day. Once more, as in Petrograd, the democratic elector, who had so largely voted for the Social-Revolutionaries and also given them an absolute majority in the Moscow Municipal Council, proffered no support to the men of his choice at the moment of real peril.

The battle lasted seven days. Shells rained over Moscow, setting fire to the houses, whose inhabitants dared not leave them, for rifle and machine-gun bullets whizzed along the streets. The city was transformed into a battlefield, over which peaceful citizens still found themselves obliged to wander, as no one had sufficient food supplies to last so long. No one knew

exactly the whereabouts of the Government or of Bolshevist forces. Every one expected the arrival of troops from the front. When it became obvious that no troops were forthcoming, the Committee of Public Safety concluded a treaty with the Military Revolutionary Committee which guaranteed the personal inviolability and liberty of the vanquished, *i.e.* of the Whites. On the 15th of November Moscow was handed over to the Bolsheviks.

Thus was all armed resistance practically ended in the cities, where the Soviets had at their disposal stores of ammunition and a considerable, although disorderly, contingent of man-power. On the contrary, in the south, in Cossack lands, the nucleus of a Volunteer Army was formed in November. General Alexeieff, disguised as a workman, with only a few roubles in his pocket, fled to the Don. Officers, who did not wish to acknowledge the Bolshevist authority, and dreamed of continuing the struggle against Germany, soon began to flock around him. The Socialist-Revolutionary Democracy eyed this new movement with disfavour, as concealing a possibility of the regeneration of a strong and disciplined Russian Army. Generals always excited suspicion among the first Soviet's members: "What if they are plotting a counter-revolution?"

When it became known that Korniloff, Denikin, and other Generals arrested by Kerensky had escaped from the Bykhov Prison and joined Alexeieff and Kaledin at Novocherkassk, this suspicious attitude towards the Southern Volunteer Army became still more pronounced.

The paper edited by the Social-Revolutionary leader, V. Chernoff, while demanding a purely Socialistic Ministry with the exclusion of Bolsheviks, said: "Bolsheviks are victorious in the north; Kaledin in the south. They join hands for the destruction of the

Revolution. Our task is to knock both counter-revolutions on the head. We must fight the Bolsheviks by force of organisation, and Kaledin—by force of arms" (*Dielo Naroda*, 16th December 1917).

Far greater sympathy was manifested in Socialist circles towards another effort of resistance to Bolshevist usurpation organised by civilians, namely, the strike of the Government officials.

Like the rest of the population Russian officials welcomed the March Revolution which brought the Russian people their longed-for political liberty. They expressed their readiness to serve under the Provisional Government, and all remained at their posts. But when the Bolsheviks seized power the officials at one with all the Russian intelligentsia received them with indignant protest, and not only did not wish to work with them, but flatly refused to recognise the Soviet rule.

It might have seemed that the modest, down-trodden officials, stifled by office routine, unaccustomed to political struggle, would be the last men capable or desirous of struggling against the new club-law, proclaimed as it was in the name of Socialism. But the Russian bureaucracy so constantly, and frequently with such good cause, denounced and rebuked by the intelligentsia opposition had proved itself capable of imbuing its servants with a sense of responsibility towards Russia as a whole which was lacking in many representatives of the liberal professions; and in the dark hour of misfortune which beset the Russian State created by the strenuous efforts of generations of Russian men and women, these inconspicuous workers who had built and supported it all rose up to defend it.

It goes without saying that the officials were incapable of offering any armed resistance when even the officers were unable to do so. But the entire State machine

was in the hands of the officials, and they resolved to prevent the Bolsheviks from assuming its control.

After the March Revolution, numerous officials employed in various Government offices and institutions had organised themselves in unions. After the November *coup d'état* these separate unions became associated in a Union of Unions, which comprised both senior and junior officials.

During the Kerensky régime, besides the sittings of the Provisional Government where Ministers mainly discussed and decided problems of general policy, there also met the so-called Minor Council of Ministers, comprised of all the Assistant Ministers, which settled questions relating to administration. After the arrest of the Provisional Government the Minor Council of Ministers continued its sittings, striving to preserve the succession of authority and, if possible, to reinstate the power of the Provisional Government.

They met secretly, like conspirators, constantly changing their quarters, as the Bolsheviks might appear at any moment and arrest them. These remnants of the Provisional Government were certainly devoid of any physical force, but the entire mechanism of the State, in so far as it is regulated by office work, was under their control. The officials indignantly refused to recognise the commissaries and offered them every possible resistance. The Minor Council met this patriotic state of mind half-way. A strike of Government officials was decided upon. When Bolshevist commissaries came to the Government offices and institutions they found either closed doors, or were met by officials who refused even to speak to the Soviet representatives. If the latter insisted, bureaux would be locked up before their very faces and keys carried away.

An important part in the organisation of the Union

of Unions and of the official strike was played by Countess Sophia Panin. She was a member of the Minor Council as Assistant Minister of Education.

An aristocrat by birth, the sole heiress of one of the largest fortunes in Russia, she devoted all her mind and rare energy, to say nothing of means, to public education. Countess Sophia Panin had erected in one of the Petrograd working-class districts a model People's Palace, which she managed herself, thereby winning the workmen's sympathy and approval. The Tsarist régime was no lover of such hobbies, and placed obstacles in the way of all cultural enterprises. But owing to her close ties with Court circles, Countess Panin contrived to safeguard her People's Palace from police aggression. She was what is known in Russia as a cultural worker, and took no part in politics. The war broke out. Countess Panin devoted herself to the complicated home war-work, without which no army could have endured the strain of the war. The Revolution compelled her to take up politics. She joined the Cadets party, was elected to the Central Committee[1] and afterwards successively occupied the posts of Assistant Minister of Public Welfare and Assistant Minister of Education. A woman of indomitable courage and resolution, Countess Panin lent not only moral, but also important material support to the strike of officials. Every strike primarily demands funds. As this strike was organised for the defence not of any class interests, but of those of the entire State, it naturally had to be supported by State funds. Countess S. Panin provided the officials with means to continue the strike for two months by advancing certain sums to their leaders.

[1] She was the second woman member of the Central Committee of the Cadet Party. The first was the author of this work, elected in the spring of 1906.

The strike of the officials gradually developed, arousing the vexation of one part of the population and the sympathy of the other. The State Bank became the object of the most bitter contest. The Bolsheviks made their appearance at the Bank, demanding that ten million roubles should be placed to the current account of the Soviet of People's Commissaries. The Council of the State Bank refused upon the plea that "The Soviet of People's Commissaries is an institution which does not possess legal rights."

The Bolsheviks arrested several officials. The Commissary reappeared at the State Bank and announced that the ten millions were wanted for the Red Guard, which would disperse if not paid. This was for the Director of the Bank a most unconvincing argument. He would have been only too pleased if all the Reds dispersed. The soldiers of the Semenovsky regiment who mounted guard at the Bank, apparently realising that the whole nation's wealth stored in the Bank's cellars could not be handed over for plunder to a band of usurpers, ignored the Commissary and obeyed the Director of the Bank. The building was several times surrounded by troops. The officials would not yield. Then the Bolsheviks changed the sentry and arrested the Council of the Bank. All the clerks struck work and withdrew, carrying away books and keys, and informing the population of their action in the following proclamation:

The State Bank is closed. The acts of violence performed by the Bolsheviks at the State Bank have rendered work impossible. The very first act of the People's Commissaries took the form of a demand for 10 million roubles, while on the 14th of November they already demanded 25 millions without stating the ultimate allocation of these sums. Even during the Tsarist régime the State Bank did not pay out money without receiving

an account. We, the officials of the State Bank, cannot take part in the plunder of the nation's inheritance. We have struck work. Citizens, if you safeguard the nation's wealth from plunder, and defend us from violence, we shall immediately resume our work.

Some attempts were made to support the strikers by collections, but unfortunately, mostly by resolutions passed in various political parties and organisations, such as the Municipal Council, the Unions of Professors and representatives of other liberal professions, the Committee for Saving the Country and the Revolution, organised to fight the Bolsheviks, etc. The latter Committee issued a proclamation of protest against the seizure of the State Bank :

This must be put a stop to. We call upon all Petrograd citizens to protest. Workmen, you are menaced with unemployment. Soldiers, the Bolsheviks make robbers of you. Protest ! Down with the rule of the usurpers !

Neither the soldiers nor the workmen responded to the call. They believed the Bolshevist leaders, who incited them against the officials, accusing them of sabotage, counter-revolutionary plots and branding them as enemies of the people. The Military-Revolutionary Committee issued a threatening order :

The wealthy classes and their menials will forfeit the right of obtaining victuals. All the food supplies in their possession will be requisitioned and the property of the chief offenders confiscated (20th November).

In vain did the intelligentsia strive to prove both in the Press and at extempore street meetings, which were still possible, that the Bolsheviks were the real enemies of the people, that on the contrary the officials were safeguarding the nation's interests by preventing the Bolsheviks from ruining the State.

In vain did the officials themselves attempt to refute the Bolsheviks' slanderous accusations by publishing a special appeal to the population :

" It is not true that the officials are not giving money for the army and bread for the population, and are stopping railway communication," ran the declaration of the Union of Unions. " On the contrary, all institutions administering these branches are unceasingly and unsparingly working by order of the Union of Unions.

" It is not true that the officials are hand in glove with the rich. The salary of most of the officials does not exceed a workman's wages. We ourselves are part of the toiling democracy ; we uphold not the rich, but the rights of the whole nation, the rights of an all-national authority, the rights of the Constituent Assembly.

" Lenin's Soviet of People's Commissaries is not a Government of workmen and soldiers, but a group of men who have usurped power despite the will of a vast majority of the population.

" They threaten to disperse the Constituent Assembly if it does not submit to their will. They are preparing a new civil war, to drown in the blood of the people the cause of national liberty.

" We should be traitors to our Motherland if we offered our knowledge and labour to the usurpers, if we assisted them in organising their power over the country, strengthening them for the struggle against the Constituent Assembly, and seizing millions of money belonging to the nation for the continuation and spreading of civil war.

" But we are not traitors, and we declare that we will not work with those who are plotting against the Constituent Assembly."

This proclamation was posted up secretly in the night in the streets of Petrograd. Several young men, caught upon the spot with proclamations, were arrested by the Bolsheviks. But the masses, whom the strikers were attempting to convince, read their bitterly truthful declaration with a contemptuous sneer.

Workmen, soldiers, women, had but one answer to all the speeches of their opponents: "We don't believe you. You are bourgeois, Korniloff minions. You've drunk enough of our blood."

There was little sense in those words, but they were repeated with the immutable accuracy of a sacred formula responding to some vague long-concealed sentiments, which now stirred the people. An impenetrable veil seemed to be drawn between the crowd possessed by Bolshevist frenzy and all those who attempted to struggle, at least by word if not by deed, against this wholesale class madness. Every act of opposition to Bolshevism aroused the acute anger of the crowds. The People's Commissaries very cleverly fanned it into flames in the Press by their speeches and their decrees. Spite against the officers and officials, against the entire intelligentsia, which had from the very beginning refused to submit to the Soviet of People's Commissaries, grew apace.

Amid the helpless protests of the more cultured classes, both among the intelligentsia and workmen, and to the loud applause of the ignorant misled populace, the Bolsheviks took drastic action against the unsubmissive officials. The great majority of the strikers were modest toilers living from hand to mouth upon small salaries. Some of them occupied Government lodgings; the Bolsheviks turned them out into the street in the cold with their wives and children. But neither material privations nor arrests, perquisitions nor menace of court-martial could prevail upon the strikers to surrender. True, at the time the Bolsheviks had only proclaimed the terror, but had not yet introduced it as a system of government. Still shots were always heard round Smolny. No one knew who might be shot at any time. But all did know that for

"sabotage" people were taken to Smolny. And yet, in spite of danger and threats, the little clerks, whose names never were and never will be known, staunchly defended the Russian State, parts of which were being, one by one, smashed to atoms by the Bolsheviks.

This strike of Government officials in which all, from Assistant Ministers down to the last junior clerk, took part, presented one of the most interesting episodes of the Russian Revolution. It demonstrated that Russian statehood had created not only submissive executors of the master's will, but had also imbued those insignificant executors with a deep, self-sacrificing national sense of duty, which in the moment of peril developed into heroism.

If that heroism came to nothing and ended in victory for the Bolsheviks, the fault lay least of all with the officials themselves. . . . Like most Russians, they believed that Lenin's power could not last; that after a certain lapse of time the Constituent Assembly would come into being and the Provisional Government would be reinstated.

History, however, decreed otherwise. In a month's time it became necessary to prepare for what was called the "liquidation" of the strike. It was drawn out until the opening of the Constituent Assembly. When it became obvious that no Constituent Assembly was possible, it was decided to end the strike. By that time the Bolsheviks had already decided they could manage everything themselves and were not in need of experienced and expert officials. They appointed porters as head-clerks, charwomen as headmistresses of girls' schools, etc. Numbers of officials remained literally in the street doomed to a lingering death.

Like all the rest of the Russian intelligentsia, the officials were confronted with the hard dilemma of either

surrendering to the mercy of the victors, whom they looked upon as criminals and enemies of Russia, or of taking up physical labour, which could not be easily obtained, or as a last resource of starting on a pilgrimage across the vast country weltering in anarchy until they might reach some border State unconquered by the Soviets.

The meritorious service rendered by the officials to the Russian State was emphasised in the farewell decree issued on the 1st December by the late members of the Provisional Government. It was signed by several assistant Ministers and by the Socialist Ministers, S. Prokopovich, A. Nikitine, K. Gvosdeff, A. Liverovsky, S. Masloff. The non-Socialist Ministers were unable to sign it, as they had not been liberated, but were still held as hostages in the Peter and Paul Fortress.

"Most valuable service has been rendered by the personnel of officials and clerks working in Government institutions in safeguarding the institutions from attempts at encroachment on the part of irresponsible and illegal usurpers." Thus ran the declaration: "Fearing neither threats, nor violence, neither shrinking from personal sacrifice, fully conscious of their right and their duty to the Motherland, the officials and employees unfalteringly carried out their trust, protested bravely and decisively against the seizure of the institutions by rebels and prevented individuals, styling themselves the 'People's Commissaries,' from taking possession of the national inheritance."

The members of the late Provisional Government, calling upon the people to struggle against the Bolsheviks, pointed out the perils of their rule:

> The negotiations for an armistice started by the rebels in the name of the Russian State can only lead to a separate peace shameful and ruinous for Russia. Unless powerfully opposed

by the Army and the People, these insane actions will reduce Russia to a state of political and economic slavery, provoke a rupture with the Entente Powers, eliminate Russia from among the Great Powers, and doom her to the fate of a vanquished nation surrendering to the mercy of the conquerors. Such unprecedented temerity of action by the rebels obliges the Provisional Government of the Russian Republic to declare that these actions can in nowise be recognised as acts of Government or as expressing the will of the people.

Admitting that " the usurpers will not refrain from laying their hands even upon the Constituent Assembly, if the latter does not submit to their will, the Provisional Government appeals to all citizens in the Army and the Homeland for a united defence of the Constituent Assembly as a guarantee of the possibility of its powerful and firm declaration of the will of the People."

While acknowledging the merits and courage of the Government officials in safeguarding the interests of the State, the representatives of the Provisional Government give a far from favourable estimate of the activities of other organisations :

The Committees for Saving the Motherland and the Revolution and Committees of Public Safety organised at the outbreak of the rebellion offered no support to the legal supreme authority, but aimed at the creation of a uniform Socialistic Cabinet. The Provisional Government has throughout firmly adhered to the principle of an all-National power. Acting upon such a basis, the Provisional Government could not recognise the authority of the rebels and would not participate in the attempt to create a new power upon the eve of the Constituent Assembly.

This was an allusion to the attempt to entice the Socialist Ministers to compromise with the Bolsheviks.

After the *coup d'état* various public forces grouped around the first Soviet endeavoured in their own way to oppose the Bolsheviks. They first organised the

Committee for Saving the Motherland and the Revolution. Later, they formed the Committee for the Defence of the Constituent Assembly.

As the leaders of the Socialist Centre might at any moment be arrested or even shot, they were obliged to act in secrecy and return to their former mode of living with false passports and under disguise, hiding in other people's flats as in the days of Tsarism. It is extremely difficult to trace their underhand activity, particularly as it brought no results. It was naturally difficult for representatives of parties which for so long had been in friendly intercourse with the Bolsheviks to find a psychological standpoint justifying a change of attitude on their part.

Upon a certain November day the Bolsheviks suddenly arrested the Lord Mayor and several members of the Municipal Council, both Socialists and Cadets. The Lord Mayor, Gr. Shreider, was one of the superior representatives of the Social-Revolutionary party, an honest, fairly able man, and a capable journalist. When he was brought to the Smolny and led into the room occupied by the previously arrested members of the Municipal Council, the arrested Lord Mayor made a tour of the Red Guard sentries and shook hands with them all.

"What *are* you doing?" indignantly asked one of the municipal members, a Cadet.

"What's the matter? I look upon them as comrades."

"And I look upon them as gaol-birds," replied the Cadet brusquely.

When at a meeting of the Petrograd municipal corporation another Social-Revolutionary, the Mayor of Moscow, Rudnev, was telling the tragic story of the capture of Moscow by the Bolsheviks, he was always

trying to emphasise the fact that he had not sought nor desired an armed struggle against them.

Even after the Bolsheviks had openly renounced their former friendship, after the Social-Revolutionary Kerensky and many others had been denounced as counter-revolutionaries, the Socialists of the Centre still found it hard to understand that now they could no longer sit between two stools, that they would either have to declare war against the Bolsheviks or submissively don the Bolshevist uniform. For the Bolsheviks were Socialists, and Socialists must stand shoulder to shoulder against the rest of non-Socialistic mankind, lumped together as the *bourgeoisie*. The attempt of the Socialistic parties to come to an agreement with the Bolsheviks, referred to by the Ministers, is thus comprehensible. It was a childish scheme, as neither the former Ministers nor the People's Commissaries desired such an agreement.

The Socialistic group that had seized power had no intention of sharing it with any one. On the contrary, the Bolsheviks were getting a firmer grip of everything, abolishing all organisations, all institutions which, in one way or another, were incarnations and expressions of the people's will.

The first stage of the armed struggle between the Bolsheviks and the adherents of the Provisional Government was rapidly brought to a close. Hardly had Petrograd been encircled by trenches against the "Kronilovist gangs of Kerensky," by Trotsky's orders, than there were no longer any anti-Bolshevist gangs either in Petrograd or in the environs. Kerensky himself disappeared on the 14th of November, and it was only in the summer of 1918 that he again turned up, not in Russia, but abroad. Moscow resisted from the 8th to the 15th of November. Then the Bolsheviks

were victorious. In both Moscow and Petrograd armed resistance was at an end. True, it was necessary to conquer the rest of Russia, but the Bolsheviks held the arsenals and munition works, the State Bank, and the Government Printing Works. They declared Petrograd to be in a state of siege, and treated the population as conquerors treat a conquered country.

In the Council of the Republic—that last organ of State where the various currents of Russian political life could still find expression—the Bolsheviks, on demonstratively leaving that "bourgeois" institution, repeated their war-cry: "All power to the Soviets! All the land to the people! Hail to an immediate, honest, democratic peace! Hail to the Constituent Assembly!"

Now they were in a position to fulfil these promises, but the Bolsheviks were consistent only in the fulfilment of the first two clauses of that short, but tempting programme—power to the Soviets, and land to all.

# CHAPTER XII

## THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE BOLSHEVIST POWER

Bolsheviks and Germans—Whence came the money?—A morality of Lenin—Trotsky and other heroes—Decrees about land and peace—Ensign Krylenko—The separate armistice—The march against the Stavka—Brutal murder of Dukhonin—The Brest-Litovsk Negotiations—Soviet rule—Decrees about the Press—Raiding of newspaper offices.

A. I. SHINGAREFF, in his diary for December 1917, thus defines the elements involved in the Bolshevist movement:

1. (*a*) The labouring classes, ignorant, politically uneducated, and embittered by social inequality and the economic ruin of the country entailed by the War;

(*b*) A mass of unbridled and licentious soldiery, averse from fighting, young, undrilled, and idle, taken away from healthy agricultural labour, at an age when their energies are still seeking an outlet, when they are easily carried away by the most extreme theories. Masses politically as ignorant, or even more so, than the workmen, and still more inclined to violence and robbery.

2. Criminals from prison.

3. Former Tsarist secret police employees who have attached themselves to Bolshevism.

4. German spies and Germanophiles.

5. Idealists of the dictatorship of the proletariat, fanatics of Social Revolution, madmen, and adepts at internal class war.

This is a broad and exhaustive analysis of their composition. Its value is increased by the fact that

Shingareff wrote his diary while imprisoned in the Fortress, where he was in constant danger of being lynched by the Reds. Nevertheless, even in prison, he tried to be just in his estimate of them, and to understand the essence of Bolshevism.

There is a widespread conviction that the Bolsheviks attained power and influence with the help of the Germans.

The officers and Cadets, who had remained loyal to the Provisional Government, related afterwards that the Red Guard in Moscow was commanded by German officers, that German talk was frequently overheard among the soldiers besieging the Kremlin. Krasnoff's Cossacks also said that the Germans had assisted the Reds in the fighting near Gatchina. In proportion to the gradual development of Bolshevism, the Soviets made ever more frequent use of German and Magyar prisoners of war for the conquest of Russian territories. Sometimes these prisoners were disguised as Russian soldiers. In January 1918 I met on the Neva Embankment at Petrograd two soldiers wearing Russian military overcoats. I was struck by their soldierly bearing, for by this time soldiers had lost all trace of military discipline. As these two smart-looking Russian soldiers approached, I overheard them talking in the purest Berlin dialect of what they would do upon their return to Germany.

It is by no means easy to ascertain how far the Bolsheviks employed German aid in their plot to take hold of the Russian State. Kerensky's Government had not concluded the investigation of the July revolt. The veil had only partially been withdrawn by the data published by the Procurator on the 3rd of August. It certified that Lenin and Zinovieff were arrested in Austria in 1914, then liberated under certain conditions.

That large sums of money were transferred to Petrograd by a Russian Jew Helefant, commonly known among international Socialists by his literary pseudonym of Parvus. This obscure international speculator, who acquired an enormous fortune, styled himself as the ideal inspirer of Bolshevism. The German Social-Democrat Haase revealed the strange connections of Parvus with the Imperial German Government. This fact did not prevent Scheidemann from keeping up friendly relations with Parvus, and from staying with him at Copenhagen in the sumptuous villa of this apostle of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Russian Intelligence Department possessed data proving the connection between the Bolsheviks and the German General Staff. But Kerensky's Government fell apart, without having published its information, and without arriving at any definite conclusion upon the subject. At the time of the November *coup d'état* all the documents of the Intelligence Department, which was immediately seized by the Bolsheviks, apparently fell into the hands of the victors. Possibly we shall never learn the whole truth of how the Bolsheviks sold and betrayed Russia. Perhaps only if revolutionary Germany consents to publish the documents of Imperial secret diplomacy, when many curious details concerning Bolshevist activities both before and during the Revolution may come to light, as well as an explanation as to why Lenin had been so graciously allowed to pass through Germany.

At times the Russian and particularly the Foreign Press published various documents pointing to the pecuniary and military connections between the Bolsheviks and the German Government. However, experts doubt the authenticity of these documents, and logically they contain many contradictions.

But some facts are indubitable. Firstly, that Lenin and other Bolsheviks passed through Germany when the war was still at a climax. Secondly, the enormous sums of money at the disposal of the Bolsheviks from the very outset of the Revolution. No other party, either Socialist or Radical, possessed the means of subsidising or planning their propaganda on such a large scale as did the Bolsheviks.[1] They printed papers and pamphlets, freely distributing millions of copies to the army at the front and in the rear. Their orators received high day-wages. Soldiers, and especially sailors who had joined the Bolshevist party, had their pockets full of hundred-rouble notes. When the sailors came to the villages to preach Marxian ideas of universal equalisation of property, the peasants were not so much impressed by their words as by the sight of the bank-notes, which the orators dangled carelessly before the simple-minded village audience.

Bolshevist *emigrés* abroad lived in great poverty. Later they received money from the Austrian and German Governments and set up publishing Bolshevist papers in Switzerland for Socialistic propaganda among Russian prisoners of war. Besides the Bolsheviks, the Social-Revolutionaries, first among whom was their leader Chernoff, also collaborated in these papers.

At the beginning of the Revolution in Russia the numbers of adherents to Bolshevism, judging by the elections to the Soviets, were not considerable, and they could not provide the enormous sums spent by

[1] The Social-Revolutionaries also possessed considerable funds. They also spent large sums on agitation and the sending out propagandists to the villages. After the Bolshevist *coup d'état*, the *Znamia Truda*, a Left Social-Revolutionary paper, declared in December 1917 that 2,000,000 roubles had been advanced to the Soc. Rev. party by the Americans through a certain Mr. Robins, delegated to Russia upon some diplomatic mission. This was not refuted. If that were true, then it follows that both the rival Socialist parties, the S. R. and the Bolsheviks, were working upon foreign money.

their leaders. Even the Petrograd Soviet and the Executive Committee at the zenith of their popularity were poor compared with the Bolshevist organisations. One is forced to draw the conclusion that the hundreds of thousands, or rather millions, spent by Lenin and his followers were furnished to them from some exchequer which possessed millions at its disposal. Only banks and state exchequers have the possibility of subsidising propaganda on such a scale. Bolsheviks were of no advantage to banks, they were rather a menace. Of all States, Germany and Austria were the only ones interested in the destruction of the Russian Army and State, in the disintegration of the Russian people through the medium of the Bolsheviks. Therefore we are faced with the only logical solution, that the millions of roubles spent by the Bolsheviks upon agitation and preparation for the seizure of power could only come from German source.

The link uniting the Bolsheviks to the German General Staff can also be mainly established by indirect proofs. From the outset of the Revolution the propaganda of the Bolsheviks as well as that of other Socialists about ending the war, democratising the army, fraternising with the enemy, met the unanimous support of German propagandists who scattered leaflets at the Russian front. The text of those pamphlets, printed by order of the Kaiser's Government, often literally coincided with that text of the leaflets printed in Russia by order of the Central Committees of the Socialist parties.

One cannot omit the fact that Bolshevist propaganda was especially rife and successful in regions of particular strategic importance, or in food-supply centres, equally important strategically. Helsingfors, Vyborg, Cronstadt, Riga were all approaches to

Petrograd. In Petrograd itself—the Vyborgsky side, Vasilievsky Ostrov, the Putilov and Obukhov munition factories. On the Volga, the principal corn wharves, and Rybinsk, Tsaritsyn, and Kazan, which contained depots of artillery plant and stores of explosives.

During the armed November *coup d'état* the Bolsheviks' dispositions exhibited traces of a military organisation whose specialists were not to be found in their ranks. The Cossacks, who fought the Red Guards and sailors near Gatchina, were amazed at seeing the Reds execute a specific German manœuvre.

As the civil war waxed stronger the participation of German officers and soldiers became ever plainer. A Magyar division was organised to oppose General Alexeieff on the Don, and soon became the military backbone of the Bolsheviks.

The Brest-Litovsk Peace was not concluded, when the Germans were already assisting the Bolsheviks in their conquest of Russia. Later on, as for instance in all the outbursts of civil war in Siberia, the Bolsheviks made still broader use of such assistance. Detachments composed of these prisoners of war were sometimes called international Socialist detachments. I happened to witness early in 1918 a Petrograd street demonstration of these internationalists carrying red flags. Their numbers were yet small, their expression surly and sheepish. But certainly, owing to German discipline then still very strong, they were more to be depended upon for military support than the Red Guards.

In any case, in spite of the Bolsheviks' clever capacity for concealing the secrets of their diplomacy, one can boldly assert that the Germans, or rather the Imperial German Government, had in every way from the very first days of the Revolution, if not before, supported the Bolsheviks, encouraged Bolshevism in

Russia, and been in close contact with it throughout.[1] The former apparatus of military espionage, particularly well organised by the Germans at Petrograd, and in Finland, was transformed by them into an instrument of political propaganda, for they fully realised the advantage of disintegrating Russia's naval and military power from inside, instead of attacking it with armed force from outside. And Bolsheviks aspired to a similar disintegration.

It certainly does not follow that Bolshevism as a whole had sold itself to Germany. Certainly not. Bolshevism, both in theory and in practice, is a complex phenomenon. Its ideology is based upon the half-scientific hypothesis of the German Jew, Karl Marx. Thus Germany becomes the motherland of Bolshevism. Practical deductions from the experience of the Paris communists were later added to this purely Marxian doctrine, and the whole was subjugated to Lenin's ambitious tactics and haughty a-morality. Lenin and Scheidemann, even the late Bebel and Jaurès pursued one aim — the establishment of a class-state with a dictatorship of the proletariat, an annihilation of all personal initiative in production and exchange. Bolshevism differs from the more moderate tendencies of Social-Democracy in method, date, in its attitude towards parliamentarism, and chiefly in morality. They all dreamed of a world revolution, but Lenin aimed at its immediate realisation, unhampered by any scruples, and unhesitating before any sacrifice.

I take the liberty of expressing my conviction that to organise the Russian Revolution he had accepted German money — most probably through the inter-

[1] Not in vain did the ideologist of German Imperialism, Rohrbach, frankly say, "Russia for the Bolsheviks, and Bolsheviks for us." Only neither he nor the Kaiser had calculated that Germany might also become infected with the rebellious spirit of revolution.

mediary of Parvus, or maybe direct from some high or subordinate German officials. It would be naïve to suppose that Lenin could be bought. He does not sell himself, but will accept money from any one. Is it not one and the same to him whose money he takes, once his entire political activity is founded upon the principle that the end justifies the means?

In that respect Lenin was not by far the first among Russian revolutionaries. Perhaps the most genuine representative of the type was the well-known revolutionist of the seventies, Nechaeff.[1] A conspirator with the iron will and merciless hardness of a great inquisitor, he composed the famous catechism of a revolutionary, which bears the same black seal of a-morality—a religious man would call it the seal of Antichrist—as do the words and deeds of Lenin.

A revolutionary despises public opinion, professed Nechaeff in his catechism. . . . "He despises and hates contemporary public morality in all its aspirations and manifestations. For him morality means everything that promotes the triumph for the Revolution. . . . A revolutionary is a doomed man. Stern unto himself he must also be stern unto others. All tender, softening ties of relationship, friendship, love, gratitude and even honour itself must be crushed in his heart by the one cold passion of revolution."

In conformity with this doctrine human beings, "all this polluted society," were divided into several categories according to their usefulness for the Revolution. All could be deceived, exploited or even murdered. "Doctrinaires, conspirators and revolutionaries idly expounding at meetings or on paper should be drawn into

[1] In his novel *The Possessed*, Dostoievsky had portrayed Nechaeff under the name of Verkhovensky, although he rather emphasised the caricature traits instead of the tragic ones.

head-splitting activities which will result in their loss of the majority of votes."

Even that detail was repeated by Lenin, who knows no mercy neither to bourgeois nor to revolutionary.

Certainly revolutionaries of Nechaeff's or Lenin's type suffer from what psychiatrists term as moral insanity. They are particularly dangerous on account of their capacity, frequently to be found in lunatics, of shaping the most fantastic, most criminal dreams into a logical scheme. It is the psychical state which begets fanatics. In former times fanaticism generally assumed religious forms, but in our days it assumes a social colouring. It may be, perhaps, because it seeks the support of the masses, and the contemporary masses fall a far easier prey to a socialistic than to a religious epidemic.

To understand Bolshevism, one must bear in mind that the Bolsheviks deny all moral standards. In that respect Lenin appears not only as the strongest but as the most characteristic figure. He draws no limit between truth and falsehood, and lies with the calm shamelessness of a man who is convinced that a universal, social revolution is an aim in itself, and is ready to march towards its realisation knee-deep in mire and blood, through crime and deceit. All the moral principles fostered by civilisation within the soul of contemporary mankind are simply non-existent in Lenin's soul. This moral disease bears a definite name in psychiatry—*more insans*—and is partly transmitted to his adepts as a new super-moral doctrine. His contempt for good and evil holds the door wide open for all criminal elements, members of the okhrana, spies, robbers, criminals, who swarm in the Soviets. But the chief members of the Soviet likewise bear the same stamp, at best of an absence of fastidiousness, and immorality at the worst.

After Lenin, the most influential Bolshevik is Trotsky-

Bronstein. In 1905 he was member of the Soviet of Workmen's Deputies organised during the first Revolution. He was arrested, and with some others deported to Siberia, whence he escaped. For eleven years he led the strenuous life of an *emigré*, painfully earning his living as a journalist. But he exhibited no particular talent for his career. His articles and books were known only among the restricted circles of socialist intelligentsia.

Trotsky is ambitious, adroit, certainly unscrupulous. Those who have met him assert that the national humiliations and police persecutions which he, as a Jew, suffered from in Russia made him detest Russia. In any case his actions as Bolshevist Dictator demonstrate if not hatred, then at least a fierce contempt of the Russian people. A pusillanimous and self-centred man, Trotsky brought over from England a hatred also of that country, because, being suspected of intercourse with the Germans, he was put into an English prison on his way from America to Russia.

Trotsky did not at once become Bolshevik. In a book written in 1906 and entitled *Our Revolution*, he professed more moderate views and advocated a Constituent Assembly. "Only an all-national Constituent Assembly, holding all the keys and picklocks[1] of all rights and privileges, possessing the right of final decision upon all questions, only such a sovereign Constituent Assembly can without hindrance create a new democratic law."

At the time he still professed Marx's view that "Socialism could not be introduced in the place of capitalism by means of a few decrees," and uttered

[1] This accidental use of a criminal by-word seems rather characteristic. Not content with the keys, Trotsky is already advising the use of the robber's tool—the picklock.

the warning that would bring the proletariat to a catastrophe.

In this book, Trotsky expressed himself against equal land-distribution, as it would lead to " a purely formal expropriation of small holders," and a weakening of revolutionary parties.

And in the spring of 1917 Trotsky appeared in Russia as a Marxian-Bolshevik. Being ambitious, he knew it would be easier for him to obtain a prominent place among the Bolsheviks, because the Mensheviks mistrusted him. As an adroit adventurer he realised that the maximum programme would more surely attract the masses and give power to their tempters. His calculations proved correct. In April, Trotsky had as yet no influence. In summer he was imprisoned for organising an armed rising, but already in September was once more at liberty and had ousted Chheidze by occupying his post of President of the Petrograd Soviet. This offered him the possibility of organising the seizure of power. At the time of the November *coup d'état* Trotsky was the leading spirit of the Bolshevist uprising. He has remained since then as one of the Bolshevist leaders. An eloquent orator, capable of hypnotising the mob, he rules over part of Russia, violating ideas and human beings, committing treason and crime, realising Machiavelli's precept, that tyrants must have no fear of bloodshed.

Lenin and Trotsky share power and influence. Friendship between them there is none. It is said that they often quarrel. Yet like two convicts, bound by the same chain, together they go from crime to crime. And when they perish they will perish together.

There are few Russians among the Bolshevist wire-pullers, *i.e.* few men imbued with the all-Russian culture and interests of the Russian people. None of them have

in any way been prominent in any stage of former Russian life. Among the Bolshevist Commissaries we may meet absolute foreigners, like the Austrian, K. Radek, a capable and dishonest young adventurer, formerly expelled from the ranks of Polish and German Social-Democracy for underhand dealing. Another foreigner playing an important part in Bolshevist diplomacy is an internationalist-Social-Democrat, C. Rakovsky, a Bulgar by origin and a Rumanian subject, sufficiently well-read, but limited almost to dulness. He was delegated by the Soviet of People's Commissaries to conclude peace with Rumania. It is open to doubt whether this Rumanian subject exhibited particular energy in the defence of Russia's interests. I met him at Petrograd in the spring of 1917 and asked: "As an internationalist adhering to the principles of the Zimmerwald Conference of no annexations and indemnities, you naturally do not seek the annexation of Transylvania to Rumania?"

Rakovsky retorted:

"What! After all the sacrifices made by Rumania, you wish us to refuse compensation in the shape of Rumanian Transylvania? . . . Not for worlds!"

Evidently, like the Swiss, Robert Grimm, this Bulgarian Socialist, who invariably attended all international Socialist Conferences, applied different standards to his own country and to foreign ones, particularly to Russia.

Besides obvious foreigners, Bolshevism recruited many adherents from among *emigrés*, who had spent many years abroad. Some of them had never been to Russia before. They especially numbered a great many Jews. They spoke Russian badly. The nation over which they had seized power was a stranger to them, and besides, they behaved as invaders in a conquered country. Throughout the Revolution generally and

Bolshevism in particular the Jews occupied a very influential position. This phenomenon is both curious and complex. But the fact remains that such was the case in the primarily elected Soviet (the famous trio—Lieber, Dahn, Gotz), and all the more so in the second one.

In the Tsarist Government the Jews were excluded from all posts. Schools or Government service were closed to them. In the Soviet Republic all the committees and commissaries were filled with Jews. They often changed their Jewish name for a Russian one—Trotsky-Bronstein, Kameneff-Rozenfeld, Zinovieff-Apfelbaum, Stekloff-Nakhamkes, and so on. But such a masquerade deceived no one, while the very pseudonyms of the commissaries only emphasised the international or rather the alien character of Bolshevist rule. This Jewish predominance among Soviet authorities caused the despair of those Russian Jews who, despite the cruel injustice of the Tsarist régime, looked upon Russia as their motherland, who lived the common life of the Russian intelligentsia and refused in common with them all collaboration with the Bolsheviks.

But of course there were also Russians among the Bolsheviks—workmen, soldiers, peasants.

The originator of Bolshevism, Oulianoff-Lenin, is Russian. Lunacharsky, Bonch-Bruevich, Mme. Collontai, Chicherin—all these influential Bolshevist leaders are Russian by origin. But that predominant class which very rapidly crystallised around the Bolsheviks was mainly composed of individuals alien to the Russian people. This fact is probably useful to them to keep control over the masses, for Bolshevist autocracy is founded upon their absolute contempt of the people whom they rule. The most terrible trait of Bolshevism is its utter unscrupulousness as to ways and means,

and the blunt cruelty of its leaders. Deceit, forgery, calumny, murder, violence, treachery — all the low, dark, brutal forces which mankind had for centuries endeavoured to get rid of—have become weapons of governing and suppression at their hands.

The intelligentsia turned from them with loathing, but on the other hand criminals small and great, policemen, okhrana officials, spies—all immediately joined their ranks, frequently occupying important posts and defending the new authorities with the utmost zeal.

Any struggle against this compact, rapidly organised band of fanatics, criminals, and traitors became extremely difficult. Before coming out, they had prepared a military organisation. Their opponents, the Provisional Government and various political parties, possessed no armed forces, and had no longer any prestige for the masses, bewitched by Bolshevism.

The poor were wearied by the privations of the war and Revolution. The wonderful speeches of the agitators baffled their understanding. The promises made their senses reel and augmented the mass psychosis of destruction which accompanies every revolution. The Bolsheviks gave their savage instincts full scope by being the first to set the example. But their principal card was that they promised most. What wonder that they became the masters ?

Having read the decrees of land and peace, peasants and workmen went over with a rush to the Bolsheviks, thus giving them from the outset the support of the masses.

Immediately after the *coup d'état*, the *Izvestia* of November 11th published the following official statement signed by the Military Revolutionary Committee :

The late Minister Kerensky, deposed by the people, refuses

to submit to the decision of the All-Russian Soviet Congress, and criminally attempts to oppose the Soviet of People's Commissaries as the lawful Government elected by the All-Russian Congress." It further stated that, "acting under the demand of the nobles and landowners, capitalists and speculators, Kerensky is marching against us in order to restore the land to the nobles, and to renew the hated, disastrous war.

As a contrast to the bourgeois Provisional Government "the Government of Workmen and Peasants, in conformity with the firm will of the army and people, has commenced peace negotiations, and given over the land to the peasants."

Thus did the new power mark its very first statements with falsehood and calumny. Certainly neither the Social-Revolutionary Kerensky nor the half-Socialistic Provisional Government had any intention of taking the land from the peasants or of working for capitalists. The Bolsheviks knew it, but this falsehood was useful to them "for tactical considerations," *i.e.* as a surer means of capturing the masses, of deepening class-consciousness, of keeping the mob in a state of constant, fierce mistrust towards all other parties, towards the entire Russian intelligentsia.

The position of the Centre Socialists, repudiated by the Bolsheviks, was an exceedingly unhappy one. The men who had wrested the power from their hands appealed to the people with the very words of land and peace which had been uttered by the Revolutionary Democracy after the March Revolution. The difference of grades, theories, dates, was absolutely incomprehensible to the masses. The mob only saw that the leaders of the first Revolution promised, but gave nothing, whereas these men no sooner had deposed Kerensky than they issued two decrees: about land and peace. The first decree embodied the realisation

not only of the Bolshevist but of the Social-Revolutionary agrarian programme, and in reality only reaffirmed what had already been accomplished by seizure, merely legalising it by the term of nationalisation. All the land was given over to all the people. All the inventory, whether live or not, became State property. No hired labour can be employed on the land. The agrarian problem must be definitely settled by the Constituent Assembly representing all the people. But the principles which are to regulate the justice of this decision are exposed beforehand. First of all, the abolition of private landed property for ever. However, this Bolshevist decree included a very cautious reserve clause of great demagogic importance, but striking at the very root of the idea of land-nationalisation: "The land belonging to peasants and Cossacks is not confiscated."

The second decree about peace declared that the Government of Workmen and Peasants had addressed a proposal to all belligerent States to conclude an immediate armistice upon all fronts.

The official Government mouthpiece, the *Izvestia*, accompanied this decree with a commentary in the style of the pacifist articles published in the *Izvestia* of the first Soviet. "An immediate and universal democratic peace can only be achieved by a Peasants' and Workmen's Government. While demanding an armistice upon all fronts, the Government of Workmen and Peasants repudiates the mean insinuation that Russian Social-Democracy aspires to a separate peace. It does not aspire to sever its ties with the Allies, but it forms a stronghold whose support will give the decisive vote to the true Labour Democracy in Allied countries." This recalls the speeches of Tsereteli and Skobeleff, who also held the view that a democratic peace would

be attained not as a result of the military operations of the Allied armies, but as a gift of the international proletariat.

At a meeting of the Central Executive Committee (20th November) Trotsky gave the following estimate of the attitude of the Powers in regard to the Soviet peace decree :

> The Allied Powers have adopted an attitude of the utmost antagonism in relation to our decree. As to our enemies, they are mainly interested in how far the *coup d'état* in Russia has weakened her. . . . As Germans they in Germany and Austria rejoice, but as bourgeois they fear our victory. . . .
>
> Antagonism to the Soviets is displayed above all by England, which plays the leading part in contemporary events, which has the least to lose and perhaps the most to gain in this war.

A different estimate is given of America's attitude :

> America entered this war not for the sake of the ideals proclaimed by Wilson, but under the influence of a sober calculation of the Exchange, and at the demand of the representatives of war-industry. America aspires not to territorial gains but to the exhaustion of all European countries. That aim is already achieved ; therefore it may be expected that America will remain the most tolerant of all towards the Soviet power.

Trotsky summed up his views by declaring that " all information as to the effect of our decree upon Western Europe tends to demonstrate that our most optimistic expectations are realised."

A few days after the *coup d'état* (if I am not mistaken it was the 19th of November), Trotsky announced the creation of a Soviet Government to the French Ambassador, and proposed to the Allies to declare an immediate armistice upon all fronts. No answer was vouchsafed to this letter, nor to any other attempts of the People's Commissaries at intercourse with the Allied ambassadors. The Bolshevist Government, which

repudiated imperialistic diplomacy and published the so-called secret treaties, naturally did not pay the slightest attention to the diplomatists' unfriendly silence. The Soviet was heading direct towards a separate peace. The suffering and humiliation inflicted by such a peace upon Russia could not trouble internationalists; the Russian State which they had seized was to them but a field of social experiments, as Lenin openly avowed.

General Dukhonin, who had assumed command at the Stavka after Kerensky's disappearance, received an order signed by Lenin, Trotsky, Krylenko, and Bonch-Bruevich, announcing the establishment of the Soviet rule. The Stavka was to propose "the conclusion of an immediate armistice to the Allied as well as to the enemy countries. . . . The Soviet of People's Commissaries bids you, Citizen Commander-in-Chief, to present to the military chiefs of the enemy armies the proposal of immediate cessation of hostilities for the purpose of opening peace negotiations." (20th November.)

Simultaneously Ensign Krylenko, now Commissary of Military Affairs, that is to say, Minister of War, issued an army order inviting every unit to conclude a separate armistice.

General Dukhonin gave no reply to the order of the Soviet of People's Commissaries. Lenin and Krylenko then inquired by telephone whether he had executed their command. The Commander-in-Chief, in his turn, replied by a series of technical questions: "(1) Is there an answer from the belligerent powers? (2) What about the Rumanian front? (3) Is there any intention of opening negotiations for a separate peace, and if so, with whom? (4) What about the Turks?" The People's Commissaries considered these questions as unimportant, and sent "an ultimative order to start

immediate and unevasive negotiations for an armistice between all belligerent countries, both Allied and such as are in antagonistic relations with us."

Dukhonin replied: "I can but understand that you have no possibility of directly negotiating with the Powers. Such negotiations in your name are all the more impossible for me. Only a central government authority, supported by the army and the people, may have sufficient weight with the enemy. I also hold that Russia's interest lies in the conclusion of a speedy general peace."

The conversation ended by a telephonic dismissal of General Dukhonin from the post of Commander-in-Chief, with the order to carry on his duties pending the arrival to the Stavka of his successor, Ensign Krylenko.

At the same time the Soviet of People's Commissaries issued a proclamation to the soldiers, which I reproduce *in extenso*:

> Soldiers, Peace is in your hands. You will not let counter-revolutionary Generals demolish the great task of peace, you will surround them with a guard to avoid a lynching unworthy of a revoluntionary army; and to prevent these Generals from escaping the judgement which awaits them, you will maintain the strictest revolutionary and military order. Let those who are in the trenches elect plenipotentiaries for opening immediate formal armistice negotiations. The Soviet of People's Commissaries invests you with the right to do so. Inform us by all means in your power of the progress of such negotiations. The Soviet of People's Commissaries is only empowered to sign the final armistice treaty. Soldiers, the task of peace is in your hands. Watchfulness, self-restraint, energy, and peace will be won. (22nd November.)

The above was one of the first State documents composed by the new Commander-in-Chief. The following series of his numerous orders present the same

mixture of demagogy and falsehood, instigation and hypocrisy, and at times, sheer insanity.

Ensign Krylenko, known as Comrade Abram, became notorious at the time of the Revolution of 1906 at election meetings to the first Duma. He was then a secondary schoolboy, and distinguished himself by his fierce Bolshevist attacks against the Cadets, particularly against Milyukoff. Subsequently he finished a course at Petrograd University, was schoolmaster in Poland, where, it is said, he adhered to the Russification policy. He was an ensign in the army at the outbreak of the Revolution, and from the spring of 1917 Krylenko made pacifist propaganda in the army committees. Both his actions and speeches are full of hysterics and demagogic psychosis, but obviously he could not fail to realise the bloody sequel to his orders and speeches. The extermination of the commanding staff had been planned by him long ago, for had not Ensign Krylenko openly declared in the summer of 1917 at a meeting of the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies: "We purge the officers' staff from below." This cynical avowal made by an officer of the Russian Army remained unreproved. Now Krylenko himself had become a member of the Government and could proceed from above with the democratisation of the army, which amounted to the extermination of the officers and the annihilation of the whole army organisation.

His views upon the subject are best judged by a consideration of those whom he included in this process of purging and extermination and others whom he promoted. At the head of the plenipotentiaries delegated upon the 26th of November to negotiate with the Germans he placed a Hussar lieutenant, Shneur, a swindler, whose services had been rejected even by the

Tsarist secret police. The other two delegates were absolutely unknown individuals, a doctor and a volunteer, both with un-Russian names.

Upon the 28th of November Krylenko, in a special Army Order, announced that the Germans had consented to an armistice, and that the meeting of plenipotentiaries was fixed for the 1st of December. "Any one concealing or opposing the propagation of this Order shall be delivered to the judgement of local regimental tribunals without the usual formalities. (That is to say, it gave the right of murder pure and simple.) I propose the immediate cessation of sniping, and fraternisation[1] upon all fronts. Every one at his post. Only the strong can hold his own. Hurrah for the coming peace!"

Thus did the Soviet announce the beginning of separate negotiations, the mere possibility of which they had refuted as a bourgeois calumny. But day by day the new masters shed one "superstition" after another. And in the first place they fell to trampling and destroying the results of the three years' heroic military efforts of the Russian people.

In reply to Krylenko's Armistice Order, there appeared in the press a statement of the doyen of the diplomatic corps, the British Ambassador, Sir George Buchanan. Trotsky's letter was received by the Allied diplomatists after the Commander-in-Chief had received the Armistice Order. The Allies were faced by an accomplished fact. The Ambassador could not reply to Notes sent by a Government unrecognised by the British Government. "Moreover, a Government, which like that of Great Britain holds its authority direct from the people, has no right to decide questions of

[1] Here the paper *Pravda* added the comment: "Doubtless this only refers to unorganised attempts at fraternisation."

such vital importance without ascertaining whether its impending decision will obtain the approval of its electors."

This statement was printed in the *Izvestia* (30th of November) with the following official comments: "The Soviet of People's Commissaries addressed its proposal to the German military authorities quite independently of any consent or disagreement on the part of the Allied Governments. The policy of the Soviet is perfectly plain. Considering themselves as not bound by any of the former Governments' formal obligations, the Soviet authorities in their struggle for peace are influenced solely by principles of democracy and the interests of the world's working class."

The *Izvestia* had by this become the mouthpiece of the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trotsky-Bronstein. Simultaneously he issued a proclamation to the peoples of the belligerent countries. He pointed out that not only did not the Soviet authorities stand in need of the consent of the "capitalist" diplomacy, but that "generally the Russian Army and the Russian people did not wish to wait any longer. We start negotiations on the 1st of December. If the Allied peoples do not send their representatives, we shall begin negotiations by ourselves. We desire a general peace. But if the *bourgeoisie* of the Allied countries compels us to conclude a separate peace, the responsibility will fall entirely upon them."

The Stavka was the last obstacle upon the Bolsheviks' way to this shameful and disastrous separate peace. Not only the Commander-in-Chief, General Dukhonin, but the Commissary and all the Army Committee attached to him, and which during the first Revolution were considered as the main source of the army's insub-

ordinate state of mind, absolutely refused to recognise Krylenko or to submit to his orders. "The All-Army Committee, supported by the resolutions of army and frontal committees, deemed it indispensable by all means to safeguard the Stavka until the creation of a universally acknowledged Government, which the Soviet of People's Commissaries cannot be recognised as representing. The All-Army Committee certainly cannot recognise you as a Commander-in-Chief, therefore your arrival at the Stavka becomes perfectly unnecessary. If, however, you wish to come as a private individual, we have nothing against it." . . . Krylenko replied to this naïve document, so full of childlike confidence, by dissolving the All-Army Committee. (Among other things this document guaranteed Krylenko's personal inviolability in the event of his arrival as a private citizen.) Only recently he had passionately advocated the sacredness, inviolability, and democratic character of these elected institutions; but then he stood in need of them in order to attain power, whereas now, when the committee made a polite attempt to set aside the uncalled-for Commander-in-Chief, his reply was quite simple—dissolution.

A regular offensive was organised against the unsubmissive Stavka, in which, however, Krylenko incurred not the slightest risk. There was no one to defend the Stavka. The frenzied soldier masses already sided with the Bolsheviks. Those of the soldiers who had not yet lost their heads were powerless to counterbalance the general psychosis. As to the Generals and officers who had remained at their post, they were quickly disposed of.

This was how Ensign Krylenko himself announced his heroic deed to "the soldiers of the Revolutionary Army and Navy":

Comrades, I have this day entered Mohilev at the head of revolutionary troops. The Stavka was surrounded from all sides. The Stavka has surrendered without fighting. The last obstacle to peace has fallen. I cannot pass over in silence the unfortunate fact of the lynching of the late Commander-in-Chief, General Dukhonin. The hatred of the people has boiled over. Despite all the endeavours to save him, he was dragged out of the railway-car and assassinated. General Korniloff's escape on the eve of the fall of the Stavka accounted for this excess. Comrades! I cannot tolerate any blemishes upon the banner of the Revolution, and such deeds should be severely condemned. Be worthy of your newly won liberty. Cast no blemish upon the people's power. The revolutionary people are terrible in war, but should be gentle after victory. Comrades, with the fall of the Stavka the struggle for peace acquires fresh power. (1st December.)

Thus did the Bolshevik Commissary describe the tragic end of a Russian General, whose sole guilt was his loyalty to Russia and the Allies unto the end.

And here is a description of the same event given by an eye-witness, the military correspondent of one of the most widespread Russian papers, *Russkoe Slovo*.[1]

General Dukhonin expected to be arrested, possibly judged, but as an officer and gallant man believed in his antagonist's nobility, and fell a victim to his trust. He did not wish to abandon the Stavka, deeming it his duty to remain at his post to the end. He organised no armed resistance whatever to the Bolsheviks; on the contrary, took all precautions to avoid bloodshed, and withdrew from the Stavka the shock-battalion, the only unit willing to defend this last stronghold of the Russian General Staff by force of arms.

Everything had been done to pacify the conqueror. But the conqueror marched forward, wrathful and impetuous. No political opponents, but avengers armed to the teeth, with artillery and armoured cars, were on their way to defenceless Mohilev.

[1] *Russkoe Slovo*, 6th December. Article by Alexander Rossoff.

Krylenko arrived accompanied by sailors and Red Guards. The soldiers eyed their new chief curiously; he was so small, so wiry, so unlike their former commanders.

Krylenko drove from the station to Headquarters, and during his absence Dukhonin was brought to the station in a motor-car.

The General looked pale and agitated, but his handsome, well-groomed head was held erect as of old. The sailors took him straight into Krylenko's railway-car. The crowd of soldiers, not yet a large one, became excited.

"Hand him over to us!" shouted several voices.

The shouts came mainly from the Red Guards. One of them, wearing a wolf-skin cap with the fur bristling out, climbed on the carriage-step and addressed the crowd:

"Comrades. Where is Kerensky? Where is Korniloff? They have not been properly guarded, the same will happen to Dukhonin. Dukhonin will also escape. They say he must be judged? What judgement? Who was judged? According to their judgement all traitors are found not guilty."

"We'll have Dukhonin!" roared the mob. "We know how to guard him."

It was as if an electric current had run through the crowd. I gazed into their faces and did not recognise them. A moment ago I had seen calm, good-natured, dull faces, chewing sun-flower seeds and staring with nothing but curiosity in their eyes. Now the faces were darkened and distorted. The men looked like hungry wolves.

The mob pressed against the door, thrust itself inside the car. They shouted, "Death to Dukhonin. Kill him."

Krylenko, who had himself incited the soldiers to lynch-law, who encouraged the Red Guards' wolfish ferocity, endeavoured to prevent the crime by speech. But by speech only.

Dukhonin could have been saved. Ensign Krylenko had a numerous suit. Not all the sailors were inclined to the lynching. Dukhonin might have been locked up in the car and the train started. But apparently Krylenko counted the cost. Passions were excited to such a pitch that any intervention on his part might mean death to him also. He only clutched at his head and sat for a long time with his face buried in his hands.

The Red Guards dragged Dukhonin out of the car. He raised his hand, signifying his wish to speak. But just then a sailor sprang upon the step and fired at his throat.

The mob raised the war-cry of victory, "Hurrah-ah!" Bayonets, swords, rifle-butts, heels—all were set to work. The savage, frenzied mob tore the General's corpse to pieces, never ceasing its cry of hurrah! hurrah! hurrah! With this sacred war-cry upon their lips our heroes died for their motherland, while here savages were performing a bestial execution and uttering the same words in blasphemy, forgetting that they were victorious not over the Germans, but over an unarmed and defenceless Russian man.

Having committed their hideous task, the mob ebbed away. In place of General Dukhonin I saw only a blackened bloody mass.

That was not merely the murder of General Dukhonin. With him a final blow was struck at discipline, wounded from the outset of the Revolution, and at the whole Russian Army. From that moment Russia, dishonoured and bound hand and foot, was laid as a booty at Germany's feet. Conditions of surrender, the duration and forms of negotiations—all these were but secondary details. The substance of the situation lay in the fact, that owing to the combined efforts of a faction of Russian Marxists calling themselves Bolsheviks, and their Allies—the Germans—Russia was conquered from the interior and brought out of the ranks of the belligerent Powers.

The subsequent history of the peace negotiations, which lasted from the first peace decree published upon the 14th November to the signing of the Brest-Litovsk peace upon the 3rd of March, is an obscure and disgusting tale of how a gang of men, unauthorised by the country, and the majority of whom were until then unknown to Russia even by name, negotiated with the Imperial German Government. They camouflaged their

treason with pompous Socialistic mottoes, they diverted the mob by sharpening its lowest instincts of greed and hatred, meanwhile hastily disbanding the army in order that no one could prevent them from selling Russia.

Not all the details of the negotiations appeared in the press: far from it. Having repudiated the Tsarist secret diplomacy, the Bolsheviks promptly restored it for their own use. Neither the exact principles of the armistice, nor the full text of the treaty were communicated to the Russian people. It was rather a matter of conjecture than of knowledge.[1]

For three years the Russian people bore the burden of terrible military tension, and sacrificed several million lives for the Allied cause. Now everything was blotted out. Maddened and helpless, it had surrendered to the mercy of its foe. One could not even call him a victorious enemy. In a military sense Russia was not defeated. Towards the spring of 1917 the Russian Army, enriched by the war experience of its leaders, was numerically as well as technically far superior to the one with which Russia entered the war in 1914. But the new wine of liberty had intoxicated the Russian soldier and made him unfit for fighting. Socialist speeches has killed his martial spirit, and the Bolsheviks had only to complete the work begun by the preachers of a democratic peace, and to liquidate the remnants of the army.

That was a terrible sight. Most terrible of all to thinking Russians was the blindness of the people. It trampled its own innumerable war sacrifices down in the mud. Accepting traitors as the true peace-makers, it raised them upon a shield and executed patriots who

[1] In October 1918, near Moscow, the Soviet arrested Mrs. Rennet, a British subject, and accused her of stealing the *secret* clauses of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. She was subsequently released and returned to England, where she gave me an account of her experience.

resented the shame and madness of the peace negotiations. The Bolshevist formula—peace at any price—was taken up by the masses and became their criterion for exalting or degrading various parties and organisations. Officers paid the heaviest penalty. Every soldier, every workman suspected them of opposition to the peaceful aspirations of the Bolsheviks and of secret sympathies for Korniloff. Soldiers' Committees subjected officers to humiliating cross-questioning, and ordered them to sign declarations of loyalty to the Soviet of People's Commissaries. In the event of refusal the officers were subjected to derision and blows, and frequently shot.

Towards the middle of December the Bolsheviks published the Order that the officers' staff should be an elected one. Soldiers' Committees were to proceed with the elections. Officers, who were not elected, were to remain in the same units as privates. All ranks and titles as well as decorations were abolished. This Order started a veritable orgy of derision. Generals were converted into cooks or grooms, their orderlies and junior clerks became commanders of divisions, almost of armies. In one division a woman commander was elected. Generals who had been unable to escape from the Stavka were compelled to execute the orders of drunken soldiers elected to high posts in their stead.

The army was transformed into a brigand's camp. The soldiers divided and sold horses, waggons, clothes, bread, food, and, lastly, guns and machine-guns. The purchasers were frequently Germans. Some of the machine-guns and rifles were carried off by the soldiers to their homes.

In the face of such conditions the Central Powers could obviously dictate any terms of peace. Yet they did not immediately lose the habit of reckoning with

the Russian Army or of considering Russia as a dangerous and powerful opponent, and therefore they acted with a certain cautiousness.

The negotiations lasted for nearly three months. Perhaps the German Diplomats and Generals experienced some perplexity as to whom they were to conclude a peace with? What weight can there be in the signature of these absolutely unknown individuals? Can they deliver aught but forged letters of exchange? Might not greater advantage be expected from a downright conquest of Russia?

All that took place during the peace negotiations was so absolutely out of conformity with the dignity of Russia, whom every foreigner, enemy, or friend alike had treated with the respect due to a great Power, that even a member of the first delegation, the Internationalist S. Mstislavsky, a Social-Revolutionary of the Left, was oppressed by what he witnessed at Brest-Litovsk.

An enterprising journalist, earning a fair amount of money during the war by writing military correspondence simultaneously in the *Government Messenger* and in semi-defeatist Left papers, and a man of very bad reputation, Mstislavsky was included through the insistence of the Social Revolutionaries of the Left, with whom he identified himself in the first peace delegation which started for Brest upon the 18th November. He gave an account of his impressions in a curious pamphlet entitled *The Brest Negotiations*.[1]

According to him the delegation was assembled in haste (literally "on the go"). The only members thoroughly versed in the state of affairs were the three Bolshevist representatives who had received definite instructions from the Soviet of People's Commissaries. The remaining six members of the political section

[1] Published at Petrograd in February 1918.

as well as the officers attached to the delegation had not even a precise knowledge as to the limit of the delegation's powers.

The above statement was all the more interesting, as all the nine plenipotentiaries, besides the officers included as advisers, were enumerated in the official agenda as members of the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Soviet of Peasants', Workmen's, and Soldiers' Deputies. Obviously, even this exalted rank did not admit its members to the mysteries of secret diplomacy which the Bolsheviks would not reveal to their comrades of the Executive Committee, even when sending them to diplomatic negotiations with the Germans.

The final aim of these negotiations is thus defined by Mstislavsky:

"An insistent repetition of the program demands of the Russian Revolutionary Democracy was expected to appeal to the peoples over the heads of German Generals. And not only to the peoples of Germany, Austria, and Bulgaria, but also to our own."

The author did not explain why the representatives of an Executive Committee sitting at Petrograd should find it necessary to appeal to the Russian people from Brest, and with the assistance of Germans, when they possessed an enormous mechanism of propaganda in Russia.

But he gives a detailed and picturesque account of a festive dinner, and of the contrast between the German delegates with their military mien and pose of men of the world, and the Russian delegation. The latter's composition transgressed all diplomatic traditions, as it comprised a soldier, a sailor, a peasant, a workman, and even one woman (Bitzenko, a Social-Revolutionary of the Left).

"In allotting the places at the dinner-table, the Germans acted in strict accordance with the revolutionary table of ranks and classes. The delegation was seated according to revolutionary rank in direct violation of ordinary precedence. The sailor Olich, as member of the political delegation, was placed above Admiral Altfater, etc."

This was at dinner. During the negotiations, however, the Germans and Austrians paid scant respect to the political members, and clearly emphasised their contempt of "revolutionary rite." Mstislavsky consoled himself by the thought that after all he and his comrades were fulfilling their duty as Internationalists, because "the plenipotentiaries of Revolutionary Russia were obliged to warn unequivocally and in terms of absolute certainty, that a military armistice for the Russian Revolution represented an act of revolutionary offensive, an act not liquidating, but enhancing, the struggle." In other words, he persuaded his readers that they went to Brest to sign an armistice with the Kaiser's Generals solely in the interests of a world-wide revolution. Certainly, under such conditions, and inspired by such aims, the plenipotentiary representatives of the Soviet were least of all concerned with the main, *i.e.* the military, problems of the armistice.

"No military deliberations concerning the possible terms of the armistice took place before leaving Petersburg. The main body of the military delegation joined us at Pskov and Dvinsk. The sum total of our military demands has not been formulated. There exists not the slightest possibility of commencing the immediate task entrusted to the delegation."

The attitude adopted by the opposite side towards a delegation of such a standard of competence may be easily imagined. "Despite all the esteem and attention

of which the delegation was the object throughout its stay at Brest, every contact with the Germans left me with a feeling of profound, withering humiliation. . . . The enemy officers, beginning with General Hoffmann, held the Russian Army in profound respect. . . . As soon, however, as matters touched upon the Revolution there appeared deceit, intimately concealed under a mask of respectful courtesy, but all the more unbearable and oppressing—it was palpable in the words and in the eyes of the Germans. And the consciousness of this deceit, the consciousness of our powerlessness to overcome it by our truth, was degrading."

The result of these negotiations, whose humiliation was felt even by a delegation of such calibre, was the signing of the first Brest-Litovsk Treaty. While appending his signature to this base document, Mstislavsky consoled himself with the hope of a future International Socialist Conference. "Inasmuch as we acted in the name of the Russian Army at the first Brest Conference, so shall we at the second (International Socialist), upon the border of peace negotiations, speak only in the name of the *Internationale*."

Such was Russia's humiliating position during these negotiations that General Skalon, a member of the second delegation, left the room and shot himself after the very first meeting.

Yet with their customary impudence the People's Commissaries declared, both in their speeches and in the press, that they were working for a universal democratic peace. That the peace was a separate one was the fault not of the Soviet, but of the Allies.

"The responsibility for the separate armistice rests entirely upon those Governments, which have not up to now declared their desire for peace, which still continue to conceal their war-aims from their own and

foreign peoples," wrote the Commissary for Foreign Affairs, Trotsky, upon the 13th December. Five days later the conclusion of a twenty-eight days' armistice, until the 18th January, was announced.

Separate negotiations became a fact. The Bolsheviks stood in need of them, because they were in haste to replace the external war by an internal civil one.

> The cessation of bloodshed upon the external front signifies the end of the hecatombs raised to the glory of international imperialism. Such is not the case upon the inner front. Here the revolutionary troops are fighting against their direct class enemies, against the landowners and capitalists, who have assembled under their banner all counter-revolutionary elements —officers dismissed from their posts, Cadets, storm-troops, the upper Cossack class. Victory in this war for life or death between the new and the old Russia is a question of self-preservation for the Socialist Revolution in Russia. (*Izvestia*, 24th December 1917.)

This article appeared, as if premeditated, on Christmas Eve, upon the day when, year after year, according to tradition, Russian journalists wrote articles upon the subject—peace on earth, good-will to men.

It demonstrated with sufficient clearness that it was not pacifist ideals which inspired the People's Commissaries to conclude a precipitate peace with Germany, but their desire to have their hands free for another war—the war against the Russian people.

The Bolsheviks evinced not a trace of that abhorrence from violence which characterised both the successive Provisional Governments and their supporters, whether Radical or Socialist. The Bolsheviks violated both body and soul.

Liberty, respect for personality, the press, the right of vote—in a word, everything considered to be the indispensable characteristic of a free legal State,

was smashed by the Bolsheviks with the furious rapture of conquerors, with the conviction that their Koran alone contained the absolute truth.

Their doctrine excluded parliamentarism. It was to be replaced by the Soviets. Of whom these Soviets were composed, how the members were chosen, how and by whom the Soviet decrees were executed, it would be both easy and difficult to relate. Chaotic elections to the Soviet at the approximate calculation of one delegate to 1000 workmen, took place at the time of the March Revolution. However, both the procedure and the character of the elections held much of the accidental and arbitrary, and the Soviets of the Revolution's early period should be regarded as irregular institutions.

At the time of the November Revolution the second All-Russian Congress of Soviets held its meetings. The Provisional Government of Workmen and Peasants, also calling itself the Soviet of People's Commissaries, was created in its name. The control of their actions belongs to the Congress of Soviets and its Central Executive Committee. Therefore some decrees of the Soviet authorities emanated direct from the Central Executive Committee, and whenever the Bolshevist leaders intended to pass any particularly hazardous measures they always previously passed them through the Central Executive Committee, which was their submissive and obedient tool. In extraordinary circumstances, such as the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly or the Brest peace, the Bolsheviks called together a Congress of Soviets, which for them became means of propaganda and government. Later, already in the summer of 1918 a similar Congress of Soviets (the fifth) adopted the Soviet Constitution, wherein were clearly stated its theoretical principles.

The fundamental task of the Constitution of the All-Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, established for the present transitionary period, comprises the establishment, in the form of a powerful Soviet authority, of a dictatorship of the proletariat both urban and rural, inclusive of the village poor, for the purpose of a final suppression of the *bourgeoisie*, of an annihilation of exploitation of man by man, and the introduction of Socialism under which there are no class distinctions and the State has no power. The class spirit of the Soviet power permeates every point of this constitution. All power belongs fully and exclusively to the labouring masses and to their authorised representatives, delegated to the Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

Only those engaged in manual labour are included under the description of labouring masses. Intellectual work gives no rights whatever.

Commercial people, the clergy, the intelligentsia were deprived of their right to vote in the same manner as formerly bad election laws deprived workmen and peasants of a representation. It was the same injustice, only turned upside down, and fraught with a still greater disadvantage to the State, because the Soviet system spurned the most educated, the most thoughtful members of the population who were most adapted to State work.

But this was the scheme. In reality it is not the class which rules, but a party. Central authority is in the hands of a small band of intelligents, while the local Soviets are purely party organisations. By means of selection, terrorism, pressure upon elections, and simple extermination of their enemies, the Bolsheviks have ousted all dissenters from the Soviets. When naïve workmen attempt to elect others than Bolsheviks to this or the other local Soviet, such an inconvenient organisation is simply dispersed by the Red Guards. This dictatorship of the proletariat has resulted, by

the way, in the fact that the working-class, never numerous in Russia, has almost ceased to exist, as the factories are either at a standstill or closed. In place of tens of thousands of workmen there now remain only hundreds. They receive high wages, work little, and represent a new variety of the innumerable Soviet officials.

The democratic principle of universal suffrage is violated not merely by the fact that only a certain section of the community is admitted to participate in the elections, but also by the elections themselves being not direct but in a series of delegated selections. From the village Soviet up to the regional, the elections rise in four degrees, with the final result, that the Russian peasants are represented by *emigrés* ill-acquainted with the Russian language, and still less so with the needs of the Russian people.

Other violations of liberty, such as the authorised flood of one type of propaganda and the suppression of free criticism, the public control in all enterprise need not be specified. Meantime, the Soviet competence is limitless, and they represent the supreme power. Former laws are abolished. The new decrees create a veritable chaos in the domain of personal and possessive right, a state of things particularly convenient to the obscure elements affiliated to the Soviets from the outset. To enhance the general iniquity, a mysterious "Extraordinary Commission for fighting Counter-Revolution, Profiteering, and Sabotage" is working parallel to the Soviet. The foundation of these inquisitorial camarillas was already laid in September, when the Revolutionary Democracy, scared by the Korniloff affair, organised its extraordinary investigation commission. During the Bolshevist régime these "chresvychaikas" ("extraordinaries") became inde-

pendent institutions from whence originated the warfare against the population, executions, arrests, perquisitions, plunder, etc. At times the Soviet of People's Commissaries uses the "chresvychaika" as a convenient instrument for the extermination of its enemies, at others they are in a state of conflict with each other.

Neither the officially published Soviet Constitution nor any of the judicial decrees make any mention of the "Extraordinary Commissions for fighting Counter-Revolution." It goes without saying that their activity can neither be criticised nor made public. Their staff is not always known. These tribunals of the Middle Ages, the originators of the most arbitrary repressions, form in company with the Chinese and the Letts one of the main supports of the Soviet power.

Possibly the Soviet Republic reflected itself in Lenin's dry, schematic brain as the harmonious edifice of a communistic paradise. In reality, it merely represents a series of self-centred organisations, taking no account either of one another, or of the Soviet of People's Commissaries, and least of all of the will and interests of the community.

According to the number of Soviet members in Russia, so is the number of autocrats possessing the power to dispose of the property, the labour, the life, and honour of every citizen and every citizeness. For performing such autocratic work these committeemen receive good wages, the privilege of driving about in motor-cars, of seizing as large supplies of food as they desire, and of plundering, if so inclined. As neither free press nor court of justice any longer exist, their activities are of course uncontrolled. It happens, however, that they are sometimes obliged to pay a heavy penalty for superfluous rapacity, and glut of possession, for the Communist Commissaries endeavour

to exterminate property as an institution. As a matter of fact, profiteering is sentenced more heavily than murder by the Bolshevist Commissaries.

But before establishing the Soviet régime all the political institutions created both by the old and the new régime had to be destroyed. The first few months of Bolshevist rule were dedicated to this process, which was conducted with an energy verging upon genius.

# CHAPTER XIII

## THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The part played by the old zemstvo—Universal suffrage—The dispersion of the Petrograd Municipal Council—Parliamentary *crétinism*—Elections to the Constituent Assembly and their results—The first broil in the Taurida Palace—Arrest of the members of the Constituent Assembly—The Cadets as enemies of the people—Discrediting the Constituent Assembly—The first and last sitting—Dispersion—Murder of A. I. Shingareff and F. F. Kokoshkin.

THE chief watchword of the Bolsheviks was the immediate seizure of power by the proletariat. All the Social-Democrats spoke of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but as Lenin pointed out very truly, the other parties were in no haste to introduce it, considering it premature, while the immediate object of Lenin and his followers was to seize power forthwith.

On the 9th November, Lenin, together with Trotsky, attained this object, fulfilling one of the fundamental commandments of Marxism. Now they, *i.e.* the Soviets, had to consolidate their position. Therefore the war-cry of the day was, "All power to the Soviets."

For the sake of establishing the authority of the Soviets, all other forms of self-government on which the social life of Russia was founded were abolished as an effete régime supported by the *bourgeoisie*.

Both local government in all its forms and also the Constituent Assembly were classed among such effete institutions, although prior to this the Bolsheviks had

given themselves out to be the only true defenders of the latter.

In Russia, with its vast distances and highly centralised system of autocratic government, the zemstvo and municipal institutions played a great part in the development of local public life. They were created in 1864, in the so-called age of great reforms, in the reign of Alexander II. Roads, national education, free medical aid, which had been well organised in Russia much earlier than in Western Europe, assistance to farmers, fire insurance—all this had been managed by the elective zemstvo and municipal institutions. Moreover, in the absence of a parliament and of the political life connected with it, local self-government had been a school for training experienced public men, where forces were grouped and habits formed for wider imperial work. The bureaucratic régime did not love the zemstvo men for their independence, for their way of looking for support to their constituents, and not fawning on official chiefs. The Ministers of the autocracy kept the zemstvo men under supervision, and oppressed and persecuted them. Alexander III. was especially jealous of even the shadow of the love of freedom and independent political activity: he even amended the laws passed by his father concerning local self-government by curtailing both the rights of the latter and also the suffrage. But notwithstanding these reactionary efforts, the Russian zemstvo created in its environment an influential and energetic radical company of men who fought for political liberty. They played an important part in the Revolution of 1904–5, many of them were elected to the Duma, where they continued to develop and introduce ideas of right and liberty connected with representative government. Under the Tsar's régime

their activity had been rather abstract in character, as Nicholas II., having signed a promise in October 1905 to give political liberty, was so short-sighted that, instead of finding support in national representation, he tenaciously fought against it, preventing the introduction of the most necessary reforms.

One of the first tasks of the Provisional Government was to draw up new laws for local self-government and to introduce them as soon as possible. In the summer of 1917 elections were held all over Russia on the basis of this new democratic law. Every citizen, irrespective of sex, had the right to vote on reaching the age of twenty years. The electors showed a strong Left or Radical tendency in voting, and everywhere Socialists were in the majority. The Cadets got one-third of the urban votes. In the district and provincial zemstvos, where the voters were mostly peasants, comparatively few of the intelligentsia candidates were successful.

These new organs of local self-government, full of new men, many of whom had got in, not because they were acquainted with local affairs, but simply because their party had to have a certain number of candidates on their party lists, were not particularly successful in the practical management of the complicated municipal affairs. Their activity was an additional illustration of the difficulties which inevitably await a Socialistic majority when it has to put its theories into practice.

But in any case they were the lawfully elected representatives of the population. They acted in accordance with a clearly defined, established law; they were subject both to the superintendence of the Government and to the open criticism of public opinion. They had the right to consider themselves part of the Government machine created by Revolutionary

Democracy; and when, in November, the Bolsheviks overthrew Kerensky's Cabinet, the new organs of self-government opposed the Soviet authorities and tried to defend their independence. But the Bolsheviks, like the Tsarist bureaucrats before them, were intolerant of all independence. As early as January 1918 the zemstvos and municipal councils were everywhere closed and replaced by Soviets.

How this was done may be seen from the story of the short struggle between the Petrograd Municipal Council and the Petrograd Soviet. A Bolshevist struggle always resolves itself into a question of physical force, and the Petrograd Municipal Council was guarded only by a body of Boy Scouts. These boys, with great importance, asked the members of the Council for their tickets, ran errands for us all over the town, and in general were both a guard of honour and a liaison service. Of course no one expected any military protection from them. And indeed the Municipal Council neither expected nor sought protection from any one. It stood outside any physical struggle, yet considered itself bound to defend the interests of the population to the end, to guard that expensive and complicated economic apparatus which had been entrusted to it. The electric trams, water supply, lighting, schools, hospitals, and lastly, the food supply —all these first requirements of the capital, which then contained $2\frac{1}{2}$ million inhabitants—were in the hands of the Municipal Council. Unfortunately, the proclamations of the Municipality, drawn up by the Socialist Centre in agreement with the Cadets, found sympathisers only among the intelligentsia and a small portion of the working classes, while the masses already looked upon the members of the Council as counter-revolutionaries.

The struggle between the Petrograd Municipal Council, elected according to an exact and clear suffrage law, and the Petrograd Soviet, elected by some unknown persons and unknown procedure, was not very prolonged. The question was decided not by right, but by bayonets, which were undoubtedly in the hands of Lenin and Trotsky. The open and implacable opposition of the Council, its really energetic defence of all the victims of the Bolshevist insurrection, the military Cadets, the Women's Battalion, hundreds of people who were imprisoned no one knew what for—all this irritated the Smolny. The time had come to sweep aside this obstacle also, the more so as, according to Lenin's theory, the Soviets were to be the sole organs of authority, administration, and government.

The sittings took place every day, but of course the debates were on politics and not municipal business. Civil war raged around. The Red Guards kept appearing in the Town Hall and then disappearing.

No work could be done under such conditions. The only thing to be done was to pass motions of protest, so as to give vent to the indignation felt both by the Council and by those around. The last protest of the Council was the declaration protesting against peace negotiations begun at Brest-Litovsk by the Bolsheviks, and the assertion that they would never be acknowledged by Russia. During this sitting a crowd of workmen appeared in the gallery of the Town Hall. They were noisy, passed remarks on the speeches of the members, and shouted :

" You have chattered long enough ! We will soon chuck all of you out ! "

The Socialist members of the Municipal Council tried to reason with the workmen, saying :

"Comrades, you have been deceived! Comrades, you are betrayed!"

"What sort of comrades are we of yours?" replied the gallery. "You are bourgeois, counter-revolutionaries. We will sweep all of you away with a dirty broom."

There was anger in the voices and the eyes of the workmen. It was clear that the Bolsheviks had managed to build up a dividing wall between the workmen and the Socialists of the Centre.

The day after this insulting and trying scene the Mayor and several members of the Council were arrested. The *Izvestia* printed a decree dissolving the municipality because it "had lost the right of representing the Petrograd population, having become completely antagonistic to its tendencies and wishes. . . . The results of the election to the Constituent Assembly confirm this. The Municipal Council has shown counter-revolutionary opposition to the will of the soldiers, workmen, and peasants, and has taken to obstruction." (1st December.)

The next day the sailors and Red Guards with rifles at the ready burst into the hall where the Municipal Council was sitting, just as if they were attacking a strongly armed enemy. The Socialist members began exhorting these new pretorians, but already the soldiers were deaf to the speeches of their late orators. The Municipality had to yield to force and to disperse, giving up the Town Hall to the Bolsheviks. After that, hoping that Lenin and Trotsky would not be in power very long, the Council still continued to meet clandestinely, almost like conspirators. These meetings were accompanied by a certain risk, but naturally were of no serious value, as the Bolsheviks had practically seized the Municipal Treasury and undertakings, and

the Council they had dispersed had nothing to do but talk.

The same short and unequal struggle took place in Moscow and in all other towns taken by the Bolsheviks. The zemstvo boards were also dispersed. The People's Commissaries abolished all forms of self-government and replaced them by Soviets. As the right of all the population to decide questions of imperial importance was to have been exercised in the most authoritative form by the Constituent Assembly, therefore for the Bolsheviks it was an obstacle to the establishment of their party authority, and so they swept it aside.

When Tsarism was overthrown by the March Revolution, all parties, all influential currents of Russian political thought were united in the universal acknowledgement of the sovereign rights of the Constituent Assembly, which was to decide the fundamental questions arising out of the reconstruction of Russia. Will Russia be a Republic or a Monarchy? What rights and relations must be established between the numerous nationalities inhabiting the Russian State? How to settle the agrarian and other social questions? All this was to have been answered authoritatively by a lawful Constituent Assembly. Its claim was acknowledged both by the Right and the Left, by Rodzianko and by Chheidze, and (at least in words) by Trotsky also.

One of the first tasks of the Provisional Government was to create an All-Russian Election Committee for the Constituent Assembly. The representatives of all parties and all nationalities took part in it. Prominent savants and lawyers were employed on this work, which then seemed uncommonly important and responsible. The President, F. F. Kokoshkin, a Moscow professor, a brilliant and widely-read man, was one of the idealistic

leaders of the Cadet party. Even the political opponents of the Cadets acknowledged that F. F. Kokoshkin combined logical exactitude of thought with definiteness of political convictions and an intelligent comprehension of differing points of view.

The Commission had no easy task to perform. There was no serious divergence in fundamental principles. The Socialists and Cadets both supported universal suffrage, based on proportional representation. The disputes were only about the age limit, the property qualification, domicile and soldiers' votes.

The Cadets proposed an age limit of twenty-five years, a year's residence in one place, and limitations for soldiers. But the more radical elements were victorious. The most democratic suffrage law in the world was drawn up, giving every citizen of either sex who had reached the age of twenty years the right of participating in the settlement of the most important problems of State.

It was necessary to organise and hold elections in a country with an illiterate, scanty population, which spoke different languages, and had hitherto taken no part in political life. The delimitation of the constituencies, the order of voting, the guarantee of its legality and correctness, the drafting of electoral rolls hitherto non-existent—all this of course required effort and time.

Now we think, with a bitter smile, of the seriousness, honesty, and thought with which the best Russian lawyers performed this enormous task in the feverish atmosphere of the Revolution. Their conscientiousness bordered on the simplicity of Don Quixote. Even then pessimists predicted that all this was futile, and that anarchy would sweep away all juridical schemes and democratic projects. But at those times the

enormous majority of politicians of all shades sincerely considered the Constituent Assembly as the sole hope of the young Democracy of Russia.

Meanwhile the Bolsheviks were already playing a double game, acting a double lie, slandering their political opponents (especially the Cadets), accusing them of obstructing the Constituent Assembly, and representing themselves as the faithful champions of the latter.

In his pamphlet, "Political Parties in Russia and Problems of the Proletariat," from which I quoted in detail in Chapter III., Lenin says that the Cadets, in answer to the question: "Is it necessary to convene the Constituent Assembly?" replied, "Yes, it is; but no date should be fixed. Let the question be discussed as long as possible by professors of law, first of all because, as Bebel said, lawyers are the most reactionary men in the world, and, secondly, the experience of all revolutions has proved that the cause of national liberty is ruined as soon as it is entrusted to professors." According to Lenin, only the Bolsheviks said, "It is necessary to convene the Constitutional Assembly, and as soon as possible. But the guarantee of its success and convocation is one and the same: namely, the increase of the number and strength of the Soviets, the organisation and arming of the working-classes."

Before demonstratively leaving the Council of the Republic, on the eve of their *coup d'état* he had already prepared for, Trotsky read a declaration containing the following:

> The Government cannot but be responsible to the Constituent Assembly. Therefore the bourgeois classes, who direct the policy of the Provisional Government, have made it their object to obstruct the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. At present this is the chief aim of the Centre parties, which guides

all their policy, both home and foreign. Hail to the Constituent Assembly!

Thus spoke the Bolsheviks, while they were in the Opposition. When they became the Government, they made an abrupt change of front, notwithstanding that their first decree, issued on the 10th November, begins as follows: "To form a Provisional Workmen's and Peasants' Government, to be called the Soviet of People's Commissaries, for the purpose of governing the country until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly."

The elections to the Constitutional Assembly were not put off, but, on the contrary, a special ukase confirmed the date which had been fixed by the Provisional Government, *i.e.* the 25th November.

On this day the elections began; but they were held at different times in different parts of Russia, as owing to the general disorganisation of life it was impossible to complete the technical preparations. The Bolsheviks created such a wave of disorder and lawlessness that many began to doubt whether they ought to take part in the elections when there was no press, no freedom of meetings, no possibility of canvassing, no personal security, and no law. But the Electoral Commission of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly insisted on the election not being postponed. The following proclamation, signed by V. Nabokoff,[1] President of the Commission, was addressed to the people:

The attempt to seize power has disorganised communications, created anarchy and terror, and interrupted the business of the Commission. Nevertheless, it is necessary to hold the elections wherever there is the slightest possibility of doing so. The gravest responsibility towards the country will be incurred by all who dare to make an attempt to corrupt the elections

[1] F. F. Kokoshkin had resigned that post several days before.

to the Constitutent Assembly, on which the whole country is fixing its hopes. (22nd November.)

The *Izvestia* responded to the challenge by printing its own proclamation on its first page :

> The *bourgeoisie*, the landed gentry, and Kerensky's Government have for eight months been doing all they could to delay the elections to the Constituent Assembly. They have been persistently and doggedly preparing to obstruct it, because they knew that in the agrarian question the Constituent Assembly would be on the side of the people. . . . Now the elections to the Constituent Assembly are secure, and must take place at the date fixed. (24th November.)

And in the Petrograd Soviet, Volodarsky, an influential Bolshevik, said : " We put the question of the elections as a matter to be fought out. The masses never suffer from parliamentary *crétinism*, and if the Constituent Assembly goes against the will of the people, the question of a new insurrection will arise. We do not make a fetish of the Constituent Assembly. If we have a majority in the Constituent Assembly, we will manage to make it the last parliamentary meeting. We will establish a Republic of Soviets."

The expression " parliamentary *crétinism* " was often repeated in Soviet circles and showed their real attitude not only towards the Constituent Assembly, but to parliamentary politics in general.

But this was too strong even for yesterday's friends and near neighbours of the Bolsheviks.

The *Novaia Zhizn* wrote : " It is pretty difficult to argue on the essence of any matter with public men of the type of Volodarsky, men who suffer from all forms of *crétinism* except the parliamentary variety. The only argument to convince them is the bayonet. Politicians of this kind can only be shown that their

hopes of a defenceless Constituent Assembly are premature and frivolous." [1]

The elections took place under most unusual conditions, inadmissible in any elections. There was no authority to supervise the legality of the elections. The institutions which carried out the process of election, such, for instance, as election committees and municipal corporations, did not acknowledge the authority of the Soviets. And the Soviet authorities did not acknowledge the laws acknowledged by the aforesaid institutions. There was no Press. The lists of candidates could only be printed here and there at intervals. But printing offices, premises of party committees, and meetings were all liable to have the Reds come in at any moment and pogrom them. In many towns there was shooting in the streets. The prominent men of all parties except the Bolsheviks and Left Social-Revolutionaries had to hide instead of talking to their constituents. Chernoff and Avksentieff, Tsereteli, and Kerensky, Mme. Breshko-Breshkovskaia, and Chheidze, all popular Socialists whose names were on the lists, did not show themselves at all, justly fearing Bolshevist attacks.

Those who took the least trouble to hide were the Cadets, perhaps because in general they were not used to conspiring. But they paid dearly for their excess of boldness.

It is impossible to enumerate all the outrages and the lawlessness that took place in connection with the elections.

It was one huge mockery of Democracy and its principles. One need not be a scrupulous jurist to

[1] The author seems to have foretold Volodarsky's fate. The latter was killed in the summer of 1918, when he was Press Commissary and treated the Press with a contumely exceeding that of the darkest periods of autocratic reaction.

acknowledge that the elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, so impatiently looked forward to—if not by the whole Russian people, then at least by all the literate and thinking part—proved a real and tragic failure.

The Social-Revolutionaries got the majority at the elections. Then came a few representatives of various other Socialistic groups. The Cadets were completely beaten, getting only 15 seats out of 600. Their candidates were elected only in large towns which formed separate electoral units. In all other districts the mass of the peasantry completely swamped the urban electors.

In order to show the altered mood of the Petrograd electors, I will give the statistics of the elections to the Municipal Council, which took place on the 2nd September, and the elections to the Constituent Assembly, which took place on the 25th November.

At the Municipal elections in September the Social-Revolutionaries polled 205,000 votes, the Bolsheviks 183,000, and the Cadets 114,000. The remaining votes were split up among uninfluential Socialistic parties. Thus, for example, the Menshevik Social-Democrats got 23,000 votes out of a total of 503,000.

At the Constituent Assembly elections 942,000 votes were recorded. Of this number, the Bolsheviks got 424,000, the Cadets got 246,000,[1] the Social-Revolutionaries got only 152,000, and the Mensheviks, 17,000. Of the votes given to the Bolsheviks, 63,000 belonged to soldiers.

[1] So little did the Socialists understand the catastrophe which had overtaken the Russian Revolution, that the moderate Socialistic paper *Dien* wrote: "The Cadets owe their success to Bolshevism. Bolshevism has discredited democracy in the eyes of the masses. For if this be Revolution and Socialism, if this be Revolutionary Democracy—then long live the Cadets! A strong poison needs a strong antidote: let Milyukoff stand against Lenin."

But while the Bolsheviks were solid and disciplined, the other Socialists were split up into a number of fractions. The largest Social-Revolutionary party had representatives of all its numerous fractions on its Petrograd list of candidates. The same list contained Social-Revolutionaries of national defencist views, like Kerensky and Avksentieff; the impudent demagogue Zimmerwaldist, and defeatist V. Chernoff; the hysterical Maria Spiridonova, who, together with the Left Social-Revolutionaries, had gone over openly to the Bolsheviks, and lastly the former employee of the Tsarist Secret Service, Kamkoff, also a Left Social-Revolutionary who was on good terms with the Bolsheviks. These persons represented different political and social opinions, and what is more important, different standards of morals. But the poor elector whose sympathies were with the Social-Revolutionary party had to vote for them wholesale, both for the honourable and dishonourable Social-Revolutionaries.[1]

The level of the political intelligence of the Social-Revolutionary Petrograd candidates for the Constituent Assembly may, in some degree, be determined by the following anecdote, related in the Social-Revolutionary *Dielo Naroda*, " Cause of the People " :

The Left Social-Revolutionaries took the Soviet of Peasant Delegates into their own hands. There, with Maria Spiridonova in the Chair, an election meeting was being held. The Socialists who had gathered round the Committee of the Salvation of the Motherland had brought their electioneering literature with them. Maria Spiridonova got angry and demanded that all the pamphlets and leaflets of heterodox Socialists

[1] According to the Russian proportional representation law, each party has to present its list of candidates, and the voter cannot alter one single name in the list. This is a great defect of the system, as the central committees of the parties thus dominate the will of the electors.

should be confiscated and stored in one room, at the door of which she placed a sentry with a rifle, in order that the harmful books should not get into the hands of the peasants.

This unfortunate revolutionary, who had at one time herself been persecuted by the Tsarist gendarmes, lost her head on getting into power, and began to treat her political opponents in the good old police way. And she had not even the excuse that these were harmful bourgeois pamphlets, as they were the publications of the Socialist Centre.

This instance shows how the November Revolution changed the morals of the Russian Revolution and brought into Russian life an utter contempt for liberty and right. No one knew when the meetings of the Constituent Assembly were to begin. The Provisional Government issued a decree in September stating that the elections would be held on the 25th November, and the Assembly would be opened on the 11th December.

On the 29th November, in a special decree, P. Maliantovitch, Minister of Justice, and S. Prokopovitch, Acting Minister of Justice, confirmed the same in the name of the Provisional Government.

But it was not the intention of the People's Commissaries to hurry with the convocation of the Assembly. When the counting of the votes began to show that they were not going to have a majority, they tried in every way to discredit the Constituent Assembly. The Bolshevik Press, *i.e.* the *Izvestia*, *Pravda*, and *Znamia Truda*, carried on a furious campaign. The Election Committee was arrested. A guard was placed at the doors of the Taurida Palace, where the sittings were to take place. Uritsky, an apothecary, was appointed Commandant of the Taurida Palace; the members of

the Constituent Assembly were obliged to get special permits of admission to the Palace from this Soviet guard.

The legislators elected to carry out the will of the nation were deprived of all possibility of exercising any will whatever, of enjoying their rights and fulfilling their duties.

Nevertheless, the members of the Constituent Assembly made an attempt to meet on the day fixed by the Provisional Government. This is how it was described in the Soviet *communiqué :*

> In the afternoon of the 11th December a crowd of about a thousand people collected at the entrance to the Taurida Palace. The crowd swept aside the guard and part of them burst through to the Taurida Palace, though the number of such was very small. Among the latter were twenty members of the Constituent Assembly. This crowd poured into the meeting-hall in a mixed mass, occupying less than one-tenth of the seats, etc.

The *Pravda* wrote more definitely :

> On the evening of the 11th December some score or so of people, calling themselves delegates, but without presenting their documents, and accompanied by armed former Horse Guards, military cadets, and several thousand bourgeois and saboteur Government employees, burst into the Taurida Palace.

Thus did the Bolshevist Press greet the first appearance of the members of the Assembly in the Taurida Palace. The Social-Revolutionaries, foreseeing obstruction on Uritsky's part, did indeed organise something like a demonstration, hoping that at least by this means they might force the Bolsheviks to open the doors of the Taurida Palace, and that the delegates might hold a private meeting. They had no other object in view, as it was impossible to start work,

owing to the absence of a quorum. But even this modest desire could not be satisfied. The members of the Constituent Assembly managed somehow to get into the Palace, but there all was in such a turmoil that it was impossible even to discuss anything. On the 13th December the members of the Social-Revolutionary party met in the library of the Duma. A young officer, the commander of the Red Guard, made his appearance and ordered them to disperse.

"We consider it not only our right, but our duty to remain here," answered the members of the Constituent Assembly. But the officer insisted, while his soldiers showed an evident desire to take the elected representatives of the Russian people by the scruff of the neck and simply throw them out of the Taurida Palace.

One of the members of the Constituent Assembly, a peasant, said indignantly to the soldiers and sailors:

"We have come here to get land, and we find bayonets. Whom are you serving—the people or the oppressors?"

"We have our orders. We must preserve discipline," moodily answered a sailor.

It was clear that by their clever propaganda the Bolsheviks had discredited the Constituent Assembly. All efforts on the part of the Socialist Centre to re-establish the confidence of the masses in the democratically elected representatives proved futile.

The League for the Protection of the Constituent Assembly, working secretly in Petrograd, issued a proclamation to the army:

> We appeal to you, defenders of our country, soldiers of the whole Russian Army. Stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of the People's Constituent Assembly. Announce that you place yourself at its disposal. Send delegations, send mandates

and resolutions. Loudly announce to the whole of Russia and to all the world—All power to the Constituent Assembly !

It was hard, it even made one blush, to read this childish babble, this attempt to counteract Bolshevist bayonets by feeble resolutions. The author of this appeal forgot that there was no longer any army ; that Dukhonin, the Commander-in-Chief, was killed ; that the Committee had demolished the organisations ; that the soldiers had turned from being defenders of their country into a terrible mob in which the voices of madmen and criminals silenced the reproaches and warnings of frightened, decent people. It goes without saying that the soldiers were indifferent to such appeals.

Simultaneously with the open persecution of the Constituent Assembly an open persecution of the Cadet party was also begun. The impulse was given by chance, but the persecution was not, of course, a matter of chance. Having driven the Social Centre from the arena, the Bolsheviks found themselves face to face with the Cadets, round whom all the radical, non-Socialistic elements had rallied.

The pretext was found in searching Countess Panin's house for the persons who had inspired and guided the strike of Civil Service employees.

The Bolsheviks chanced to find one of the vouchers signed by the Countess Sophia Panin, and issued an order for her arrest, accusing this woman, who had spent millions of her personal money on the people's cause, of embezzling Rs. 93,000.

When the Red Guards came to her house they happened to find some members of the Constituent Assembly there—A. I. Shingareff and F. F. Kokoshkin. Both had just come up to Petrograd in order to take part in the inauguration of the Constituent Assembly on the 11th December, and had stayed at Countess

Panin's, where the meetings of the Executive Committee of the Cadet party took place.

The commissaries who were making the search were loth to let such important prey out of their hands. They telephoned to the Soviet for directions. The answer was simple: "Arrest them." All three were taken off to the Smolny. In the evening Countess S. Panin was taken to the Viborg Prison, and the former Ministers were taken to St. Peter and Paul's Fortress, where the Ministers who had been arrested at the Winter Palace were still imprisoned.

The same day the Soviet of People's Commissaries issued a short, but solemn decree:

ON THE ARREST OF THE LEADERS OF THE CIVIL WAR AGAINST THE REVOLUTION

The members of the leading institutions of the Cadet party, as a party of the enemies of the people, are liable to be arrested and brought up for trial by Revolutionary tribunals. The local Soviets are charged with the duty of special supervision over the Cadet party in view of its connection with the Korniloff-Kaledin war on the Revolution.

In a more detailed official communication the Soviet of People's Commissaries supplemented its accusations against the Cadets. I shall quote it in detail, because all the argumentation is so characteristic both of the way the Bolsheviks treat the truth and of their methods of influencing the masses. The Bolsheviks act systematically. They establish certain propositions, most frequently clothing them in short and catchy war-cries such as, "Peace to cottages and war on palaces," "Down with capitalist Ministers," etc., and then they ceaselessly repeat and paraphrase these war-cries, attracting attention to them by the very repetition

and, as it were, hammering them into the minds of the masses. In this respect they can teach us something.

While they were pressing on as an Opposition they only required war-cries. In order to consolidate their power they were obliged to modify these war-cries gradually and, above all, to give more and more food to the hatred they had aroused in the masses. In this respect the Cadet party was a tit-bit. Distrust and animosity to the Cadets had been sown by all the preceding Socialist agitation. Menshevik and Social-Revolutionary orators grew black in the face trying to prove that Milyukoff was an Imperialist, that the Cadets were bourgeois flunkeys, etc. Sometimes they even went so far as to declare that it was better to be under the Kaiser than under Milyukoff. Many understood very well that they were talking nonsense, but they felt bound to vituperate the party which placed the interests of the State and the nation as a whole above the interests of the workmen, the peasants, or any other class, and insisted on the necessity of continuing the war until Germany was defeated.

The Soviet proclamation to all who laboured and were exploited had been drawn up in haste, and was not distinguished by the usual smoothness of the Bolshevist lie. It began thus :

> The *Bourgeoisie*, led by the Cadet party, got all its forces ready for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly in order to start a counter-revolution.

Then followed an enumeration of military conflicts with Korniloff, Kaledin, Dutoff, and other White Guards who, the Bolsheviks pretended, had declared that " the insurrection had been begun at the direct demand of the Cadet party."

" Thus a regular Civil War has been started on the

initiative and under the guidance of the Cadet party. The Central Committee of this organisation is at present the political headquarters of all the counter-revolutionary forces of the country. This work, which is a direct menace to the cause of peace and all conquests of the Revolution, is carried on under the cover of the Constituent Assembly."

Then follows the foregoing story of how the *bourgeoisie* burst into the Taurida Palace. The Cadets wanted to make the Constituent Assembly into "a legal cover for a Cadet-Kaledin counter-Revolutionary insurrection. The voice of several bourgeois delegates was to be represented as that of the Constituent Assembly."

The Soviet of People's Commissaries informs the masses of this conspiracy:

> It will take all measures necessary, fully recognising the enormous responsibility which must lie on the Soviet authorities for the fate of the people and the Revolution. The Soviet of the People's Commissaries declares the Cadet party, as an organisation of counter-revolutionary insurrection, to be enemies of the people. . . . The Political leaders of the counter-Revolutionary Civil War will be arrested. The bourgeois insurrection will be put down at any cost. . . . Down with the *bourgeoisie*! The foes of the people, landlords, and capitalists ought not to have any place in the Constituent Assembly.

Having declared a party which had just in the capital got 240,000 votes to be enemies of the people, the Bolsheviks gave the Provincial Soviets a free hand in dealing with the local Cadet leaders and electors, and the Soviets took full advantage of this. But the Central Committee continued to live a semi-public life. Meetings were held almost every day. It is true the venue was often changed, as the club of the party was closed and all the furniture, including the property of the servants and housekeeper, had been looted and carried

away by the Red Guards. Prominent Cadets sometimes did not pass the night at home for fear of being arrested, but they spoke at great public meetings. The Cadet newspaper, *Rech*, was sometimes closed and sometimes appeared under another name, but all the time invariably attacked the Bolsheviks. In it appeared the protests of various organisations against Bolshevist oppression; among others, the protest of the Cadets against the arrest of the members of the Constituent Assembly:

> Contemptuously sweeping aside the slanderous accusation that our party is inimical to the people, the Committee of the party consider that outlawing any one is a return to mediaeval barbarity. . . . The party declares that no persecutions, no threats, no oppression will make it turn aside from the path it has taken ever since the old régime, or will force it to cease its struggle for the rights, liberties, and welfare of the people.

The Cadets were mistaken. The Bolshevist gendarmerie turned out to be infinitely more implacable than the Tsarist gendarmes had been, and the old path of struggle—a struggle of ideas and principles—was soon barred. It was replaced by stark physical force. But to do the Bolsheviks justice, they forced their way not by means of bayonets, but by war-cries. The resolutions passed by them at meetings and Soldiers' Committees helped them to make the Constituent Assembly powerless and futile. Here is one of these resolutions:

> We, soldiers of the Izmailovsky and Petrograd regiments, declare that the policy of the Cadets is also the policy of Kerensky, Korniloff, and Kaledin, entailing the enslavement of the Russian people, and perpetual wars and exploitation of workmen's labour. We soldiers, who are defending with our blood the interests of the labouring people all the world over, will not permit our hard-won revolutionary rights to be violated by Milyukoff and Co., who want, by means of false elections to the Constituent

Assembly, to get their illegal regulations passed in order to enslave anew the rights of Russian citizens. . . .

Away with the policy of the Cadets in the Constituent Assembly. We demand that reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries, all the Milyukoff gang, should not be admitted to the Constituent Assembly where the liberty and Revolution of the Russian people must be consolidated, and not the Counter-Revolution and Sabotage of the Milyukoff gang, whose place is in St. Peter and Paul's fortress.

The soldiers who passed this resolution did not understand even half of what the expert Bolshevist agitator had palmed off on them. The very word "Cadet," which had its origin from the initials "C" and "D" (Constitutional-Democrats), was taken by the masses to mean officers and military cadets. One thing the soldiers were quick to understand correctly, and that was that Lenin was against the war, and Kerensky, Milyukoff, Kaledin, and the Cadets wanted to fight the Germans. If their demand should be supported by the Constituent Assembly, then perhaps it would again be necessary to go to war. The Bolsheviks cleverly took advantage of this pusillanimity of the soldiers. Of all the parties the Cadets, with Milyukoff at the head, were most insistent in their demands for "war to the end." Therefore the Bolsheviks nick-named the Constituent Assembly "the Cadet Assembly," although there were only fifteen Cadets in it, and all the rest of the delegates were Socialists. This was the lie on which the Bolsheviks founded their power over the mob, and at the same time justified the reprisals against the theoretically immune national representatives.

The Bolsheviks kept declaring that the Constituent Assembly was not the supreme organ of the national will. The electors, politically undeveloped and unaccustomed to appreciate and guard the inviolability of

political elections, readily accepted the Bolshevist theory, that as they had elected the delegates they had also the right at any moment to withdraw their confidence from the latter. Universal suffrage, which Russian democracy, both Socialist and Radical, had sentimentally dreamed of for several decades, lost all its glamour in the eyes of the very masses for whose sake the Russian champions of political liberty had won it at the cost of such sacrifice.

The Petrograd Soviet no longer promised bread, as the food supply was palpably decreasing day by day. Instead of that, promises of peace, shamelessly intermingled with calls to start a civil war, were regularly repeated.

"Hail to the universal Democratic Peace! Hail to the International Labour Revolution! Long live the Soviet power, opening the way to the Peace of Nations! Down with those who want compromises! Down with the traitors to the Ukrainian Rada!" [1]

This last cry was a sort of justification of the war started by the Bolsheviks on the Ukraine, and therefore all the more outrageous was the next war-cry: "Long live the Liberty and Brotherhood of the Peoples of Russia!"

The Soviet called for a "fraternal union of revolutionary workmen, peasants, soldiers, sailors, and labouring Cossacks," but required them to carry on a ruthless war against all who did not acknowledge the authority of the Soviets.

The Constituent Assembly must acknowledge the authority of the Soviets and the decrees on the land, peace, workmen's control, etc. The Cadets are enemies of the people. There is no place in the Constituent Assembly for the enemies of the people. The people ought to recall the flunkeys of Russia from

[1] Parliament.

the Constituent Assembly. Shame on the Avksentevistes and Chernovistes!

On the day after the demonstration in which banners with such devices were carried, an order was issued for the arrest of Avksentieff and Chernoff. They managed to escape, but the Socialist Centre, which so short a time before was the centre of authority, was broken and disorganised.

The majority of the soldiers very soon learned the formula that suited them, namely: "We do not want to shed our brethren's blood," and, remaining neutral, enjoyed all the advantages of the soldiers' position, but showed no desire to take part in the civil war to which they were at bottom thoroughly indifferent. In vain did the Socialist opposition call upon the Petrograd garrison to make a demonstration in favour of the Constituent Assembly, which was to be opened on the 18th January. It was proposed to hold a peaceful demonstration, and indeed it could be no other, as the defenders of the Constituent Assembly had no arms. Some one or other was carrying on hazy negotiations with the officers, persuading them to "stand up for the Constituent Assembly." The officers asked plainly, "Is it necessary to be prepared for armed resistance?" The answer was, "It is proposed to have a peaceful demonstration; but, of course, anything might happen . . ." The other party, the Bolsheviks, made far more definite preparations for this day. They got out 2000 sailors from Cronstadt and, arming them with machine-guns, ordered them to occupy the Taurida Palace. Only those who had permits from Uritsky were admitted. The members of the Constituent Assembly justly considered such a permit derogatory to them, but they were obliged to submit.

Two days before the opening day an attempt was

made to assassinate Lenin under very strange circumstances, which made people think that it was a simulated attack. Some one shot at his motor-car and missed; but this shot gave the opportunity the Bolsheviks wanted. They talked loudly of the Terror. At a meeting of the Soviet (16th January) Zinovieff, who had replaced Trotsky while the latter was engrossed in Brest-Litovsk diplomacy, made the following declaration :

> Only one accusation will be brought against the Soviet authorities—that of being too lenient with their opponents.

The same spirit was shown by Bonch-Bruyevich, Secretary of the Soviet Government and People's Commissary, who under the Tsarist régime had acquired a certain degree of fame by his articles and researches in defence of religious liberty. Under the Bolsheviks he came out as an enemy to all liberty, and advised the soldiers to allow no agitation in favour of the Constituent Assembly in the barracks.

The following motion was passed at this meeting: "On the day the Constituent Assembly is opened it is proposed to hold a demonstration in honour of the Constituent Assembly, the watchword of this demonstration being 'Down with the Soviet authority!' Saboteurs, bourgeois, and their minions will take part in this demonstration." In view of this the workmen and soldiers were requested not to leave their works or barracks, and the Soviet authorities promised to put down most ruthlessly the movement directed against itself.

Such promises they knew how to keep.

On the 18th January the first and last sitting of the Constituent Assembly took place.

On the same day the demonstration took place, in

spite of all obstacles and threats—a demonstration made in answer to the appeal of the Committee of the Defence of the Constituent Assembly. In the centre of the town, on the Liteiny, near the Field of Mars, and on the outskirts of the town, a considerable crowd of demonstrators collected. The bulk of them belonged to the educated classes: there were many women, schoolboys and students, clerks and officials. There were also some workmen. Again red revolutionary banners were carried, which such a short time ago had waved victoriously in all the streets of Petrograd. But now the Red Guards took away these banners of Liberty and tore them into shreds. Both sides were boiling with hatred against each other, and the rifles went off of themselves. A volley was fired on the Liteinaia, injuring not only the demonstrators, but likewise chance passers-by, children and women. Gorbachevskaia, a young girl-student who was carrying the red banner of the Social-Revolutionaries, was shot down, a similar fate overtaking Loginov, a Social-Revolutionary peasant member of the Constituent Assembly, and several other persons. The obstinate demonstrators would disperse when fired on, and then again walk on in a crowd, carrying their cherished banners with the device, "Hail to the Constituent Assembly!" And in the very hour while the rifle-fire was rattling, in the Taurida Palace, surrounded by machine-guns and guarded by inimical sailors, the elected representatives of Russia began their vast and onerous task of reconstructing the State on new, free, and democratic principles.

The Revolution had cleared a way for them for constructive work, and had thrown among the masses Socialistic ideas, or rather Socialistic appetites, because it was difficult for semi-illiterate people to grasp Socialistic ideology. The people had given their votes, their

confidence, their fate to the representatives of the Socialist parties. All other political groups were set aside. It might have seemed that the Revolutionary Democracy, which since March 1917 had reigned in the Taurida Palace, might now celebrate its complete victory. But this day was no holiday—rather a day of mourning. Incautious words, a theory not fully worked out, irresponsible promises—all that the Revolutionary Democracy had lived for during the months of its spiritual dominion over the masses—had borne poisonous fruit. Like dragons' teeth cast into the earth by the hand of the sorceress did the evil spirits of hate and anarchy arise out of the earth, and there was no escaping them.

A series of scandalous scenes took place in the Constituent Assembly. Quarrels arose about everything: about the right of entry; about who should open the session. The Soviet of People's Commissaries considered itself privileged, and wanted to determine the procedure. The Social-Revolutionaries, who were in the majority, wanted the chairman to be elected from their party. Two chairmen were elected simultaneously. There was a struggle, and Sverdloff, the nominee of the Soviet, was victorious. This took place to the accompaniment of a clamour of shouts and shrill cries, the public taking a lively part in all this. With their caps on their heads, rifles in their hands, and cigarettes between their lips, the soldiers and sailors strolled all over the Palace, even in the hall where the members were sitting: they occupied the gallery, the passages between the members' seats, and behaved themselves not like a guard in a legislative assembly, but like ill-disciplined warders in a prison. When the delegates wanted to enter the hall, at first the sailors would not let them in. One of the delegates said indignantly:

"How dare you exclude us! Don't you know who we are?"

The young sailor answered in an off-hand manner: "I know: you are the servants of the People. We will give you orders and you shall obey us."

The Bolsheviks got their own way. The All-Russian Constituent Assembly was turned into a barrack-room meeting, where it was not the voices of the national representatives that predominated, but the voices of those who leant on their rifles.

After Sverdloff had read the declaration of the Soviet, a president was elected. The Bolsheviks, perhaps as a joke, took Maria Spiridonova for their candidate. She was a Left Social-Revolutionary. Her name had made a stir not only in Russia, but also abroad. During the Revolution of 1905 she was about twenty when she killed a provincial official who had been very brutal in suppressing the Revolution, and M. Spiridonova won fame not so much as a bold terrorist as by those insults and tortures to which she was subjected by the gendarmes. After a trying period in prison she was tried and sentenced to hard labour in Siberia. The Revolution set her free. Her one-time martyr's halo secured her a prominent place in her party. But all her speeches and actions showed an unbalanced and hysterical nature. Her escapades were at first found amusing, but later roused indignation not only among the Radicals, but also among such Socialists as had not lost their heads. Her association with an unmasked *agent-provocateur*, whom she made every effort to save from trial, was especially repulsive. In the Social-Revolutionary party she occupied a far more prominent place than the old Revolutionary Breshko-Breshkovskaia, Vera Figner, etc., with whom Spiridonova could not, of course, compete, either

as regards ability, education, or stability of moral principles.

This hysterical woman, this mistress of a Secret Police employee, was the person whom the Bolsheviks wanted to make President of the Constituent Assembly. They did not succeed. The Bolsheviks, even including the Left Social-Revolutionaries who joined them, were in the minority. Spiridonova got 158 votes, and Chernoff, the Social-Revolutionary candidate, got 244. But even this signified little, and was of no practical importance. The national assembly was already doomed. The Bolsheviks demanded that the Constituent Assembly should confirm the decrees and resolutions of the Soviet of People's Commissaries enumerated in Sverdloff's declaration. These were not few in number. They were in substance as follows: Russia is to be declared a Republic of Soviets, who hold all power. Society is to be organised on Socialistic principles. Private property in land is abolished and replaced by nationalisation. Workmen's control is established, the banks become the property of the Workmen's and Peasants' Government. Universal compulsory labour is introduced. A Socialistic Red Army is to be formed and the propertied classes are to be totally disarmed. All loans are repudiated. The Constituent Assembly is to put the stamp of its approval on all the decrees and, besides that, to join in the foreign policy of the Soviet authorities in cancelling all secret treaties " for the attainment, by revolutionary measures and at any cost, of a democratic peace between nations, without annexations or indemnities, on the basis of the free self-determination of nations."

But this was not all. The Soviet of People's Commissaries demanded—and this showed their haughty, deep-seated contempt of the people's will—that the

Constituent Assembly (whose sovereign right all parties without exception had proclaimed and acknowledged) should renounce its rights and transfer them to the Soviets. I quote this clause in its entirety, as it shows clearly the theoretical attitude of the Bolsheviks to the essence of Soviet authority. Their theoretical attitude, I say, for in practice they were obliged to simplify everything, making the bayonet the source of their authority.

> Having been elected on the basis of party lists made prior to the November Revolution, while the people could not, as a whole, rise up against their exploiters, did not know the full force of their opposition in defending the privileges of their class, and had not practically begun to construct a Socialistic Society, the Constituent Assembly would consider it radically wrong, even from a formal point of view, to place itself on a level with the authority of the Soviets. . . . Power must belong exclusively and wholly to the working-classes, to their fully empowered representatives—the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers, and Peasants' delegates. Supporting the authority of the Soviet and the decrees of the Soviet of People's Commissaries, the Constituent Assembly acknowledges that its objects are limited to the general working out of the fundamental principles of the Socialistic reconstruction of society. At the same time, striving to create a freer and more voluntary—and therefore fuller and firmer union of the working-classes of all nationalities of Russia, the Constituent Assembly limits itself to establishing the fundamental principles of the federation of the Soviet Republics of Russia, allowing the workmen and peasants of each nationality to come to an independent decision at its own authoritative Soviet Congress as to whether they wish to join in the Federal Government and other federal Soviet institutions, and if so, then on what basis.

The position of the Social-Revolutionaries, to whom this ultimatum was presented, was not an easy one. Much in the Soviet declarations was a repetition of their programme and formulae. The Bolsheviks had

the right to point the finger of scorn at the Social-Revolutionaries, who did not applaud the clause about the nationalisation of land, the liberation of the working-classes, a revolutionary democratic peace without annexations and indemnities. When it was the turn of the Social-Revolutionaries to explain their programme and V. Chernoff began to read his declaration, at times he seemed to be repeating the declaration of the Bolsheviks themselves. They shouted to him :

" You are too late ! We have already passed all this ! "

And they were right.

But V. Chernoff still hoped to regain his lost popularity. He began by praising Zimmerwald: "That mighty protest of the Socialists of all countries against the fratricidal butchery. The Russian Revolution was born with words of peace on its lips, and the Russian Revolution cannot but remain true to the watchwords of democratic peace—without victors or vanquished. . . . All the land must become the property of the nation, without any indemnity to former owners. . . . It is of course necessary for the working-classes to take into their own hands the management of all the production in the country, and after a period of control of production, to pass from factory autocracy to an era of compulsory labour in all branches of production."

The same old trite Socialistic speeches !

But still, to the demand for submission to the Soviet, Chernoff answered evasively, and haughtily :

" I cannot conceive how the lawful will of the majority of the population, expressed by means of votes recorded by the most perfect system in the world, can be subjected to any kind of obstruction (*sabotage*), unless that of madmen."

His speech, like the speeches of two other former

Socialist Ministers—Prince Tsereteli and M. Skobeleff —was interrupted by hostile cries. After the Bolshevist *coup d'état*, this was the first public engagement between the Socialist Centre and the Left wing. The Bolsheviks behaved with the impudence of victors.

"Hangman!! Traitor! You would down soldiers and workmen! Your hands are bloody!" they shouted during Tsereteli's speech.

This evidently touched him to the quick, for he began to assure them that the Constituent Assembly would abolish capital punishment. The Bolsheviks threw another accusation in his face:

"Saboteur!"

"Saboteur? Well, if you have undertaken to introduce Socialism, and throw the blame of the non-success of the Socialistic experiment on the *bourgeoisie*, then you stand self-condemned as unfit," he replied; but it was too refined an answer and was above the heads of his audience.

Poor Tsereteli! It was the second time that in the fine hall of the Taurida Palace he had had to make his farewell speech before political enemies whose hands were raised to strike him down.

Ten years before he had parried the blows which were showered on him by Stolypin, the omnipotent Tsarist Minister, who wanted to break, not only the Revolution, but also the independence of the young representative régime. Stolypin ordered all members of the Social-Democrat party to be arrested. Prince Tsereteli, who was then quite a young man, knew of this, but instead of saving himself by disappearing, as his friends proposed, he mounted the rostrum in order to expound his views for the last time boldly before the whole of Russia. Then his fiery, eloquent speech breathed a proud faith in the righteousness and

the strength of the Marxist doctrines and in the saving significance of the future Revolution. Even those who did not share his views listened to him with involuntary respect.

And now again Tsereteli is a representative of the people. Again he stands in that high rostrum. Again, as before, the open prison doors are ready to receive the bold leader of the Social-Democrats. But what a change! The Revolution—that ennobling, abstract Revolution he had dreamed of, for the sake of which he had suffered penal servitude—was shattered, disfigured, broken. Now it was not the Tsarist but the Socialistic police who were ready to take him to prison, and perhaps to execution.

No wonder that Tsereteli's speech breathed bitterness and impotence. For it was not from his foes but from erstwhile friends that he had to defend what he still styled "the democratic conquests of the Russian Revolution," what might be simply called Russia's right to life and liberty. The tragedy of his position was increased by the fact that he could not help remembering his own former speeches. Speaking of peace, he said: "You may cry, 'Kaledinist!' to every sentence of mine"; and perhaps at that moment the supporter of the ruinous policy of Army Committees understood how the Soviet as first elected had cleared the way to Brest-Litovsk.

The Bolsheviks interrupted all the speakers and would not listen to them. Their plans were already made. By their scandalous behaviour they had compromised the Constituent Assembly as much as they could, and then they employed the favourite method which they always used for breaking up a meeting—they left the hall after having entered a reasoned declaration of the cause of their withdrawal. They

announced that the Constituent Assembly, in refusing to carry out the will of the Commissaries, had thrown down the glove to all labouring Russia.

"In the Constituent Assembly, Kerensky's, Avksentieff's, and Chernoff's party of Right Social-Revolutionaries have got the majority. This party, which calls itself Socialistic and Revolutionary, is guiding the struggle of the bourgeois elements against the workmen's and peasants' Revolution, and is really a bourgeois party. The present counter-revolutionary majority in the Constituent Assembly, elected by out-of-date party lists, is a Revolutionary back number."

The Social-Revolutionaries interrupted them by laughter or by indignant cries of "Lies!" And the soldiers and sailors kept thumping the butts of their rifles on the floor of the hall. And this noise announced more plainly than any declaration that the Constituent Assembly was a failure. The powerless majority hastened to pass several resolutions. The Russian State was declared to be a Federal Republic. It was declared that "the right of property in land within the limits of the Russian Republic is abolished henceforth and for ever." Their declaration concerning the war was hazy and ambiguous, owing to an attempt to combine obligations to the Allies with Zimmerwald:

"In the name of the peoples of the Russian Republic, the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, expressing the immutable will of the people to terminate the war immediately, and to conclude a just and universal peace, proposes to the Allied Powers that the exact terms of peace should be determined in concert, for the purpose of presenting these conditions to the Central Powers."

At the same time, "regretting that the negotiations with Germany, begun without any preliminary agreement with the Allied democracies, have assumed the

character of negotiations for a separate peace, the Constituent Assembly continues to preserve the Armistice established, and has taken upon itself the further conduct of the negotiations with the hostile Powers, in order that while defending Russian interests a universal democratic peace may be concluded in accordance with the will of the people."

All these three declarations were passed at four o'clock in the morning without any debate. The voters could hardly hear the text of the declarations. The soldiers and sailors who crowded near the delegates' benches became clamorous. One of the sailors came up to the President and announced :

" I have been ordered to inform you that all present are to leave the hall as the Guards are tired."

The delegates shouted : " We don't need any guard ! " The sailor insisted, and made Chernoff adjourn the meeting.

The Secretary had barely time to read out the above-mentioned declarations when, hastened by the soldiers' mockery, and partly by their rifle-butts, the elected representatives of the Russian people were obliged to quit the Taurida Palace, the doors of which closed on them for ever.

The next day a decree was published dissolving the Constituent Assembly. The real essence of the decree was as follows :

The old bourgeois Parliamentarianism is effete and incompatible with the aims of realising Socialism. It is not general, national institutions, but only class institutions, such as the Soviets, that can overcome the resistance of the propertied classes, and lay the foundations of Socialistic society. The part of the Constituent Assembly left after the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks can only serve as a cloak for the attempts of bourgeois counter-revolutionaries to overthrow the power of

the Soviets. Therefore the Central Executive Committee has resolved that the Constituent Assembly be dissolved.

The Soviet of People's Commissaries entrusted this to the Central Executive Committee, so as to be able to assert that the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly was in accordance with the will of the people, which they could now counterfeit with still greater impunity.

This destroyed the last hope not only of the Revolutionary Democracy, but also of all who still dreamed that it was possible to organise the new régime in free Russia by peaceful methods, without civil war. Now came the terrible days of disappointments and calamities which, in a greater or less degree, had gradually to be experienced by all classes of the population, but first by the leading circles of intellectuals, who at once grasped the full extent of the political catastrophe. It was a real tragedy for those members of the Provisional Government who were imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress, N. M. Kishkin, A. I. Konovaloff, M. I. Terestchenko, A. V. Kartasheff, Paltchinsky, M. Tretiakoff, M. Bernatsky, and Smirnoff. In the beginning of December these were joined by three members of the Constituent Assembly, A. I. Shingareff, F. F. Kokoshkin, and Prince Dolgorukoff. The conditions of their imprisonment were truly awful. The Russian educated classes, fighting against Tsarism, were not accustomed to dread imprisonment. Many brutalities were practised in the Tsarist prisons. But the brutality and lawlessness of Bolshevist prisons exceeded anything that had been known under the Tsars. In the fortress it was damp, cold, and dark. At first the prisoners were allowed no outdoor exercise; then they were permitted to go out, but for a very short time. Food could be brought to them from home, but everything had to be eaten cold. The chief thought of the

imprisoned Ministers was how to keep warm. However, all these physical privations could not be compared with their moral sufferings. The arrested Ministers were in the so-called "Trubetskoy Bastion," enwrapped in heroic legends of the martyrs of Russian liberty who had been imprisoned there during the nineteenth century. The bastion had its own guards with a sailor at the head, so that the fortress was under two masters. The young and honest sailor behaved with great decency towards the prisoners, and formed, as it were, their own inner guard. This was absolutely necessary, as the rowdy garrison, composed of shady, if not criminal elements, was capable of any crime. At its head was their elected commander, an orderly named Pavloff. This coarse, savage, almost illiterate soldier mocked the prisoners with all the shamelessness of a petty adventurer who was maddened by the prisoners' mental and moral superiority.

The former Minister of Public Worship, A. V. Kartasheff, an inspired philosopher, who had the passionate saintliness of an early Christian, was placed by the soldier Pavloff for several days in a wet cell, without any light, bed, or food, except a piece of bread. And this was not a solitary case. The arrested politicians lived in an atmosphere of constant degrading annoyances and mockery, behind which ever lurked the terrible phantom of a bloody death.

Most of the Ministers were Cadets, *i.e.* according to the terminology of the Bolsheviks, counter-revolutionaries, Kaledinists, and enemies of the people. The soldiers considered themselves free to treat them as they liked.

More than once threatening shouts were heard in the corridors: "Give them to us! What is the use of being on ceremony with bourgeois? We will show

them a thing or two." These were the same cries that were heard before General Dukhonin's death.

The relatives, the numerous friends, and political adherents of the prisoners were in constant alarm for their lives. Having made the members of the Provisional Government prisoners, the People's Commissaries brought no accusations against them, did not put them on trial before any court, but kept them as hostages in the fortress under conditions which remind one of mediaeval torture chambers. All efforts to obtain their release proved futile. The only hope was the Constituent Assembly. The Ministers talked of it when they met during their short outings in the prison yard; they prepared for it, hoping to render an account of the activity of the Provisional Government to the nation's representatives. Konovaloff, who had replaced Kerensky the day of the latter's flight, had been elected to the Constituent Assembly. He was entrusted with the task of preparing for the Government's appearance in the Taurida Palace, and he did draft a speech. It seemed impossible that the Supreme Master of the Land of Russia, as it was the custom to call the Constituent Assembly, would not release from prison those who had so diligently cleared the way for national representation.

This hope and the friendly relations which had arisen among the prisoners in the tragic environment of life in the fortress gave them strength to bear the physical and moral sufferings and privations. Nevertheless, the health of the prisoners was undermined, and their relatives, with the aid of the doctors, managed to get some of the Ministers transferred to the hospital.

On the evening of the day when the Constituent Assembly was opened two Ministers of the Provisional Government, F. F. Kokoshkin and A. I. Shingareff, were taken from the fortress to the Marie Hospital.

The same night sailors and Red Guards came to the hospital and brutally murdered both. Kokoshkin was killed at once, probably without waking from sleep. Shingareff lingered for several hours, one mass of wounds, those in his head and stomach causing him tortures. His relatives could not be fetched, as by some one's mysterious orders that night all the telephones in the hospital had been disconnected with the Exchange. Shingareff died in delirium, speaking of his children with anxiety and alarm, and then whispering something about his murderers. The doctors who were present said that he seemed to be murmuring words of forgiveness. That is very possible, and very like him. Shingareff was one of those Russian intellectuals who made a cult of self-sacrificing service and love for the people.

Imprisoned in the Fortress, and expecting death at any moment, not only did Shingareff not abandon his faith in the people, but with the incurable obstinacy of an idealist wrote in his diary :

If I were offered to begin everything all over again or stop it, I would not hesitate for a moment to begin all over again, notwithstanding all the horrors the country has gone through. And this is why. The Revolution was inevitable, because the old state of things had outlived its time. The equilibrium had been disturbed a long while ago, and the foundations of the Russian State, which we so aptly termed a colossus with feet of clay, were supported by the ignorant masses of the people, deprived of any connection with the State, frequently deprived of even common patriotism. The striking disparity between the heads of society and the lower strata at its base, between the leaders of the State in its past forms, as well as the leaders of the future, and the mass of the population—struck me while I was yet a young man, during my first years of university life. It was not only a danger to the existing order (which would not have mattered much), but it was a great danger to the State.

These ideas led me to the conclusion that it was necessary to draw the higher and lower strata of society together, to establish a firm and real connection between them. Then everything seemed useless to me—science, art, politics—unless they had that object in view. That is why I gave up my previous plans of devoting myself to science (which had an attraction for me) in order to go to the people as a doctor.

He had built up all his life on the idealisation of the people, on defending the principles of the widest democracy. Both he and Kokoshkin were real spiritual champions, who cast aside all that was personal, all that was egotistical, in order to serve the abstract principles of Truth and Right. And their murder, so brutal and meaningless, is one of the most terrible and repulsive proofs of the criminal venom with which the Bolshevist Revolution had poisoned the national soul.

The crime remained unpunished, and not finally investigated. There is reason to think that Lenin took no part in planning it. At any rate, when, on the morning after the murder, the friends of the surviving Ministers went to the Smolny, as dark threats had also been uttered against the latter, Lenin was thunderstruck and apparently even disturbed by the news of the crime. Articles appeared in the *Izvestia*, condemning the murder —it is true, from a special Bolshevist point of view, but still, condemning it. "Apart from everything else, it is bad from a political point of view. This is a fearful blow aimed at the Revolution, at the Soviet authorities. Such crimes are capable of undermining the faith of the masses in the Revolution, and the Revolution lives and rests only on the sympathies and faith of the masses."

As the assassins were sailors the Naval Commissary, Dybenko, who had himself taken part in the massacre of officers at Petropavlovsk, published the following order :

This affair must be thoroughly investigated. The honour of the Revolutionary Fleet must not bear the stain of an accusation of Revolutionary sailors having murdered their helpless enemies, rendered harmless by imprisonment. I call upon all who took part in the murder—if these were misguided persons, and not counter-revolutionary oppressors—to appear of their own accord before the Revolutionary tribunal.

It goes without saying that this original method of discovering the criminals led to nothing. No one gave himself up of his own accord, though several persons were arrested. Among the latter was Private Bassoff, who had accompanied Shingareff and Kokoshkin from the Fortress to the Hospital, and then had brought in the murderers and held the lamp over the beds while the scoundrels were shooting their sleeping victims. Thus one of the accomplices was found. But it was not known whether they had acted on their own initiative or had been instigated by others. If so, by whom? By a small gang? Or by some more responsible organisation? There is cause to think that the last is most probable. The local district Soviet took some sort of part in the crime. At any rate, the detachment of sailors and Red Guards, before bursting into the Hospital, called at the Soviet for some reason or other. But the people who tried to discover the chief criminals were firmly assured that the principal clues led to the "Commission for fighting the Counter-Revolution, Sabotage, and Profiteering." Many deeds of darkness were (and are) perpetrated in this institution.

This Commission had occupied the house of the former Prefecture of Petrograd, 2, Gorokhovaia Street, and some of the former policemen, spies and secret agents had entered the service of their new masters. Apparently, German agents also found easy access to this secret office of the Inquisition, where the fanatical and

lunatic political formulae of the Smolny were converted into regular crimes.

Such division of labour had the effect of making Lenin's position easier, removing from him, as it were, part of the responsibility for the specially bestial acts of the Soviet.

It was no easy matter for the uninitiated to penetrate into the secrets of Bolshevist actions, and, especially, to understand the division of jurisdiction between the Soviet of People's Commissaries and the "Commission for fighting the Counter-Revolution," and Lenin always reserved the right of throwing the blame on the latter. But it goes without saying that the moral responsibility for the murder of Shingareff, Kokoshkin, and many others falls wholly on the Soviet.

It was the Soviet which roused that blind fury in the soul of the people, egging on the masses against the educated classes, and foully slandering the most honourable statesmen.

Under the influence of their furious, lying agitation, the unfortunate, uneducated, embittered, bewitched people took its friends for its foes, and its bitterest enemies, who were driving Russia to ruin—for its friends.

Possibly the sailors who shot the sleeping arrested ministers imagined that they were administering Revolutionary justice, executing counter-revolutionaries. They could have had no intention of robbing, for they took nothing, stole nothing. They came, murdered, and then vanished. They went to report their achievement to some one who had sent them.

But to whom? That is the question. Who wanted the death of these two men? Kokoshkin was a scholar, for whom politics were what military service is to a conscripted soldier. He fulfilled his duty honestly and boldly, but loved thought better than action. Shin-

gareff, from the time when the Bolsheviks seized power, fought openly, attacked, exposed, constantly called upon his hearers to struggle against the usurpers. His words about the German mark found in a room after a Bolshevist raid, his constant reminder of the connexion between the Bolsheviks and the Germans, lead to fearsome suspicions. Who knows but that German marks had something to do with this murder ?

Only judicial authorities, independent, accustomed to the support of the law, could have discovered the real culprits. But there was no justice. There were only Revolutionary tribunals—caricatures of courts of justice.

The murdered men were members of the Constituent Assembly. Both believed in Russian democracy. Both hated oppression and lawlessness. During both Tsarist despotism and revolutionary demagogy they were bold and honest champions of freedom. They bore, and even overcame, the persecutions of Stolypin and other Tsarist ministers. But " Left " despotism, with the red banner of Socialism waving over it, proved incomparably harsher and more perfidious than the old régime. The friends and political adherents of the murdered men, and indeed all thoughtful and honest Russians, felt this heavy sacrifice to the Revolution very keenly. The death of these two prominent politicians was a terrible loss to Russia. At that time, people had not grown accustomed to crime. But even the details of the murder committed in the capital bear witness to the powerlessness and moral degradation already permeating the people. For if the indignation roused by the murder had been active, then the Soviet of People's Commissaries would have been forced, if not to lay down its power, then at least to discover and punish the culprits.

But the conscience of the mob had already been

poisoned. Already the passion for destruction which follows upon a revolution was assuming more and more terrible and criminal forms. That is why there was no difficulty in dispersing the Constituent Assembly, or in persecuting and murdering the people's representatives with impunity.

By their work of destruction the Bolsheviks seemed, as it were, to pander to the secret desires of the masses roused by revolutionary licence. And the Bolsheviks proved past-masters of destruction, and of defending their work of destruction by words that were lying and cynical, but intoxicating to the mob.

In the end of January, when reporting to the Third Congress of Soviets on the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly, Lenin said haughtily :

" Yes, we *are* oppressors."

Trotsky supported him.

" We have trodden underfoot the principles of Democracy for the sake of the loftier principles of Social Revolution. We are against oppression, but we will not yield our power without a ruthless struggle."

And the sailor Zhelezniakov, who took part in the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly, formulated his political creed of Bolshevism in still simpler terms :

" We will not exchange our rifles for a voting-paper."

At least this was candid, and more sincere than the first watchword of the Bolsheviks : " Hail to the Constituent Assembly ! "

# CHAPTER XIV

## BOLSHEVIST GOVERNMENT

Economic Phantasies—Expropriate the expropriators—A Blow at the World *Bourgeoisie*—The Budget of the Bolsheviks—The Workmen's Control—Contribution—Lenin's Speech—The Abolition of Justice—Revolutionary Tribunals—Judgement pronounced on Countess Panin and General Boldyreff—Indulgence shown to a Secret Agent—Hostages and Executions without Trial—Struggle with the Press—The Press and Elections—Campaign against the Church—The Clergy and the Intelligentsia—Holy Processions.

THE Bolsheviks, who generally speaking are very consecutive in theory, have applied "higher principles of social revolution" to all branches of life, to economics, to justice, to the Press, and even to the Church.

It was not difficult to abolish political freedom in the interest of a class, and actually for the alleged rule of the proletariat, seeing that the old régime had died, and the new representative one was not yet formed. Much more difficult and unrealisable was their effort to rebuild the complicated system of national economics, which was previously based on personal property and private initiative, subjected to, but not restricted by state laws. In economics, as in politics, the Bolsheviks aimed at absolute submission of individuality to the State. And according to their scheme the State acquires such absolute power over the property and life of everybody as not only the Romanoffs, but even the despots of ancient Assyria or Egypt never dared to dream of. In this

respect the Bolsheviks are more insatiable than all the Imperialists of the world. Starting from the Marxist principle that only the State has the right to dispose of every man's work, seeing that any other labour organisation gives birth to capitalistic exploitation, the Bolsheviks desired to make the Soviet power the only employer. To this end they nationalised the banks, industry and trade. All State loans were cancelled. All payments on coupons were stopped. The land and the factories became the property of the workers. The houses were confiscated. Additional inmates were installed by force in private homes, and even the furniture in them nationalised. The latter measures, however, are of secondary importance; they are meant partly for the greater humiliation of the bourgeois, and partly with a view to general compulsory equalisation. First, we must distinguish among the economic Soviet measures that which is done for the purpose of carrying out new Socialistic principles from what is done for the weakening and in some cases simply for the ruining of the "bourgeois," including the intelligentsia. The second category requires no criticism by logic. It must rather be examined from the standpoint of morals, as in it we see only the fury of civil war sown by the Bolsheviks. The Soviet leaders yield easily to wrath, as, like all despots, they feel that their power cannot last long. Their weakness is organic, internal, because their theory is unrealisable and they are unable to create new forms of production. Economics have their laws, which are stronger than the will of despots, even of Socialists. It is quite possible to take away personal property from those who have it. But to distribute the confiscated property justly and equably among all the inhabitants proved to be impossible. Still more impossible was their system of state direction of labour,

that is, their particular form of State serfdom. The old serf system died in Russia because it proved inefficient not only morally, but also economically. Now the Bolsheviks have made an experiment in State serfdom in one part of Russia, and have failed. One of the reasons of their failure is the fact that under their system labour bears a still more acute and more compulsory character than under that of capitalism. And yet theoretically the Soviet power is considered to be the dictatorship of the proletariat, a dictatorship of men of physical labour. And who can compel dictators to work?

Seeing that there are undoubtedly learned men among the leaders of Bolshevism who are well informed on economic questions, and that Lenin himself began his career with scientific economic researches, they certainly can see the weakness and instability of their economic prospects, and they name in advance the culprits of their unavoidable bankruptcy. It is, certainly, the *bourgeoisie* and its creatures who are guilty by "sabotaging" the Soviet Power's measures. Prince Tsereteli was right in saying in the Constituent Assembly that this accusation is a proof of the poverty of Socialism. But it was in the first March Revolution that the apparatus of capitalism was shaken, the economic commanding staff weakened, all employers, directors, engineers, discredited, and all discipline, without which no productive, collective labour is possible, destroyed.

That the modern capitalistic régime has engendered and is fostering social diseases and injustices is a plain truth, against which no thinking, honest man will seek to argue. The question is, how can mankind be cured of these ailments, how to create a commonwealth founded on justice and humanity. What has happened in Russia

shows that Socialism does not hold the keys to this paradise, and that a different morality, different methods, a different attitude to human mentality and to every man individually are required to create a new mankind.

The extreme wing of the Socialists completed and deepened what had been done, if not under the guidance, then at any rate with the encouragement and approval of the Socialistic Centre. They carried the system to an extreme, and thereby fully revealed its defects.

The incitements against the *bourgeoisie* were a necessary part of their work, because in this way the class-consciousness was elucidated, according to the favourite expression of the Marxists. Civil war was an inevitable consequence of this acute antagonism of interests of one class against another.

Having carried through the *coup d'état*, the Bolsheviks through the Commissary of Labour, Shliapnikoff, addressed an appeal to the workmen, calling on them to put the Revolution and its conquests on a firm basis.

The propertied classes are endeavouring to create anarchy and the ruin of industry by provoking the workmen to excesses and violence over the question of foremen, technicians, and engineers. They hope thereby to achieve the complete and final ruin of all businesses and eventually to close the doors of all the mills and factories. The revolutionary Commission of Labour asks you, our worker-comrades, to abstain from all acts of violence and excess. By a joint and creative work of the labour masses and proletariat organisations, the Commission of Labour will know how to surmount all the obstacles in its way. The new revolutionary Government will apply the most drastic measures against all industrials and those who continue to *sabotage* industry, and thereby prevent the carrying out of the tasks and aims of the great proletarian and peasant Revolution. Executions without trial and other arbitrary acts will only damage the cause of Revolution. The

Commission of Labour calls on you for self-control and revolutionary discipline. (12th November.)

Thus, while inciting against the skilled industrials, as being not only the chief enemies of the revolutionary people, but also lunatics, who have themselves ruined their businesses to spite the workmen, the Bolsheviks hypocritically took refuge in a spurious warning against violence.

As a matter of fact these arbitrary acts not only tallied with the theory of class hatred, carried to the point of class extermination, but at the same time led surely to one of the goals of the Marxist movement in general and its Bolshevist faction in particular. The Socialists had always clamoured for the " disorganisation " of the bourgeois régime, and the Bolsheviks have accomplished this part of the programme with success. This was a necessary stage on the road to the substitution of the socialistic régime for the capitalistic. This substitution could only take place after the fire of the world Revolution had destroyed the old rotten props of the *bourgeoisie*. Russia's example must carry away the proletariat of the whole world. Seeing that Russia is a backward country with a small and unorganised middle class, it will be easiest of all to make the Revolution, or as Lenin said, the " social experiment " in Russia. Even if it is not possible to achieve final success, the road will be opened, and an example shown. As Lenin was not sure of the duration of his power, he hastened to make the experiment as quickly as possible, without at all guaranteeing success, or stopping to think of the sufferings of the people over whom he had seized power. With regard to Russia he acted not with the strict firmness of a surgeon who wishes to save the patient, but with the cold cruelty

of a vivisector, who does not care whether the rabbit dies after the experiment or remains crippled for life, dragging out a miserable existence.

The Bolsheviks always considered their acts from the international point of view and endeavoured not only to sweep the Russian *bourgeoisie* from the face of the earth, but also to carry disorganisation into the capitalistic régime the world over.

In their official issues published in Geneva for circulation in Europe, they characterise the importance of the economic decrees of the Soviet of People's Commissaries as follows.

In the preface to the "Decree on the Nationalisation of the Banks" they say:

> This is a dagger-thrust straight into the heart of the capitalistic economic system. It is well known that in our time the bank is the real centre both of production and of exchange in every country. In this capacity it directs world policy, and the terrific explosion of the present war must be ascribed precisely to this concealed power. Hence the monopolisation of the banks is a decisive step towards the downfall of contemporary Imperialism. It is the foundation of new economic relations, where gold will cease to have power.

The decree for the stopping of the payment of coupons is accompanied by an identical note:

> The cessation of payment of coupons and dividends is closely connected with the annulment of the foreign loans, proclaimed by the government of the Soviets. Both these measures, as also the nationalisation of the banks, are directed against the very foundations of capitalistic finance, against its system of credit. It is certainly not easy by one blow to liberate economic life from this complicated network. Capitalistic finance is continuing in Russia and against Russia its underground work. But the Soviets have shown how to break its backbone, and its hour of downfall is near.

They certainly succeeded in breaking the backbone of the Russian financial system. Russian money has lost all value on the world market. Even in Russia it is enormously depreciated. And it could not be otherwise when the whole Bolshevist financial system is built exclusively on the printing of paper money, not guaranteed by any kind of reserve.

This leads to a hypertrophy of the budget of the Soviet of People's Commissaries. As they have created a monstrous bureaucratic apparatus through trying to turn almost every one into officials, their budget has reached simply comic proportions. With the general disorder and absence of records, nobody will be able to fix exactly the expenditure of the Soviets. In summer 1918, however, the *Pravda* published a speech of M. Gukovsky, Commissary for Finances, delivered by him at the Congress of the Soviets, in which he pointed out that it would be necessary to expend during the first half-year twenty-four billion roubles, whereas the revenues would not exceed one billion, and even that was not quite certain. Since then the expenses of the Soviets have grown still more, because in view of the rise of the prices of food-stuffs, living has become very expensive, and it is necessary to raise the salaries of the officials. Besides, the expenses for the army are continuously growing. And the revenues come only from forced contributions from the inhabitants, and chiefly from the printing machine of the State.

The socialisation of the land destroyed the possibility of taxing the landowners. There are no trade profits because private trade is stopped, and nationalised trade brings only losses, as also does industry, now transferred to the hands of the Soviet workmen. The Bolsheviks did not risk nationalising all industry at once. They did this gradually, and in most cases not

entirely but only partially. They established, however, the workmen's control. The details of this are set forth in a long decree which curiously enough contains a clause providing for the right of the proprietor to lodge a complaint against the decisions of the workmen's Soviet. In fact, however, the proprietor is quite powerless before the will of the undisciplined workmen.

During the first period of the Russian Revolution, the more reasonable Socialists, and also in part the Radicals, recognised the need of introducing State control over industry. The road to this was already prepared by the regulation of the distribution of orders, raw material, produce, and transport, which had become familiar during the war in all belligerent countries, including Russia.

But to hand over the whole business into the hands of the workmen was certainly a product of Socialistic rule.

The Russian workmen had neither any experience nor professional organisation, nor even elementary economic knowledge. Their control mostly meant looting and rioting. They dismissed engineers, technicians, foremen, and generally speaking the whole skilled staff. On railways the workmen elected pointsmen as directors. One of the principles of the Bolshevist reconstruction of life was the right of the whole staff to participate in all matters affecting the concern or institution in question. In the universities, the doorkeepers and floor-sweepers took their seats beside the professors to decide together academic questions. In the hospitals the lowest menial attendants elected or dismissed doctors. In schools the maid-servants were appointed to the post of lady-superintendent. This brought such chaos into life that finally even people who were willing to carry out their functions under the

Bolsheviks were involuntarily compelled to practise *sabotage*.

In a paper dated October 1918, that is, a year after the Bolshevist *coup d'état*, an order of the Bolshevist Commissary of Moscow was published in which he complained that only "secret saboteurs" served on railways, and as a result of this there were 2000 unloaded cars accumulated in the Moscow railway junction.

The fundamental idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat regarding the right of physical toilers to dictate their will to all the rest, and especially to the brain workers, who formerly directed and organised the working energy of the nation, was carried out by the Bolsheviks to its uttermost limits.

One can only wonder at the economic flexibility of the Russian people, who still manage to live in some way in spite of the absurdities of the economic and administrative phantasies of the Soviet dictators. The reason for this is that Russia is an agricultural country, that the town population did not exceed 10 per cent of the whole. It is now even less. Thus in Petrograd, for instance, there were $2\frac{1}{2}$ million people at the time of the Bolshevist *coup d'état*, and ten months later only 800,000 remained. The people in the villages remain unconcerned, are trying to lead their lives independently of Bolshevist fancies, and when pressed too hard by the commissaries get peace by paying or else by shooting them.

The result of the workmen's control showed itself very rapidly and led to a complete ruin of production. The workmen proved unable to conduct any complicated business; they sold the raw material and shared the money among themselves. The Soviet of People's Commissaries was compelled to subsidise even those concerns which had quite a short time previously

given good profits. This demoralised the workmen and turned the factory committees into assemblies of parasites.

Lenin and his adherents kept stubbornly repeating to the masses that their welfare would be secured as soon as they took from the *bourgeoisie* all it had filched from them. The primary axiom that labour is the essential condition of life is set aside and replaced by the tempting dream of an everlasting repartition of property. The land, factories, capital, houses, furniture, clothes—all must be divided. Then will come an end to the idleness of the landowners, capitalists, engineers, directors, and all other counter-revolutionaries, and the peasants and workmen, in their turn, will be able to become idle.

How often at improvised street meetings the absurd words were heard: "We shall take everything from you, we shall divide all and each will get 100,000 roubles."

This was said with a threat. The opponent, more often than not being a badly-dressed intellectual, with patched boots, who perhaps never held so much as a 1000 rouble note in his hands, tried in vain to make the dreamers listen to reason: "But where will you get so much? Rich people are not so numerous. You will begin to divide and end by plundering, and all the same there will not be enough for every one."

From all sides angry eyes are fixed at the insolent bourgeois. "Not enough, you say? Probably hidden away in all the trunks? Don't like to part with it? There'll be enough for us. You've drunk enough of our blood."

The idea of requisitions, for which there was a formula in the Communist Manifesto—expropriate the expropriators—has utterly shaken the people's wealth,

sapped productivity, disaccustomed the people to work, and killed the basic conceptions of right, law, and justice.

The plunder was not restricted to landlords' estates, private capital, and factories. Annexations and indemnities, which the Socialists feared so much in international relations, were applied to the widest extent in internal life. The Soviets, revolutionary committees, extraordinary commissions, all sought annexations and imposed indemnities on the inhabitants of the conquered towns. Such was the system of government. When the naïve president of a provincial Soviet asked for money from the Soviet of the People's Commissaries they mostly answered: "Haven't you got any rifles?"

The picking of pockets proceeded with an extraordinary rapidity. But to whom and where the money went—nobody knows, and probably never will know exactly. In any case the members of the committees and the commissaries were not in need of money.

Plunder became a custom. People boasted of it as of a proud achievement.

If on the one hand petty pickpockets, especially when caught red-handed, were ruthlessly shot, on the other hand the Soviet leaders and their Press systematically encouraged plunder. In February 1918 Lenin uttered in the Smolny a farewell speech to agitators bound to the provinces. The programme stated by him is marked by tempting simplicity.

"We have before us two strong foes. The first is international capital. There is no doubt that so far it is stronger than the Soviet Republic and that their existence alongside of each other is impossible. But the capitalists are already sending to us their commissaries, and will perhaps recognise the Soviet Power and even the annulment of the loans." Lenin explained

this concession on the part of the capitalists of the Allied countries by the enthusiasm with which the legislative work of the Soviets was met by the workmen of the whole world. "Our position is absolutely solid, because we have behind us all the workmen of the entire world. But in order to strengthen it, we must struggle with the second foe—internal ruin. Neither the Tsar's, nor Kerensky's authority could organise the distribution of food-stuffs. The Soviet Power must surmount this difficulty and before all settle the economic life of the villages. No one will help you, comrades. The whole *bourgeoisie*, officials, *saboteurs*, go against you, because they know that if the people, whose common property was hitherto in the hands of capitalists and village tight-fists, now divide all among themselves, they will clear Russia of drones and weeds. In the villages the rich peasants will be against the Bolsheviks, but it will be easy for you to fight there, because the masses will be with you. They will see that not punitive expeditions are coming to them from the centre, but agitators, bearing light into the village, eager to rally all those who work for themselves and do not try to live at the expense of others. . . . A struggle will blaze up between the rich and the working peasants, and the poor ought to be helped not with a book, but with experience of a personal struggle. . . . External war is ending. That is unmistakable. Now begins internal war. The *bourgeoisie*, having hidden their plunder in trunks, are saying quietly to themselves: 'Never mind, we will wait a little longer! The people must make them return what they have plundered. You must do this on the spot. It will not be the police who will compel them to do this. It is for the people to do this, and there is no other means to fight with the *bourgeoisie*." (*Pravda*, February 19.)

It was in this cold-blooded and well thought out way that Lenin instructed the agitators to organise a general wholesale plunder. Like all Lenin's acts this speech is not an accidental outbreak of wrath, but only a link in his consecutive, systematic heartless work.

It is natural that with such encouragement of wholesale violence the Bolsheviks were bound to cancel justice.

The juridical statutes of Russia, created in 1863, in the so-called epoch of the great reforms in the reign of Alexander II. were constructed on a very humane and well-proportioned plan. Even the later innovations which aimed at restricting the independence of the courts could not injure the main foundations of Russian justice. But the Bolsheviks destroyed it by a single decree. They said that the former laws were created to support the bourgeois régime and to protect the institution of property. The old courts were guided by these laws. Hence there was no more need for these courts. There was no need of any juridical standards. It would be enough to have revolutionary tribunals, through which the people themselves would punish or pardon. On November 24, a decree was issued abolishing the Senate, the Higher Courts, and all other courts of justice. Their functions were to be carried out by special judges, elected through the Soviets.

It is said that when Shcheglovitoff, one of the most hated of the Tsar's Ministers, who by his contempt for law and for the independence of the judges, demoralised the Ministry of Justice at the head of which he stood, read, while imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress, the decree for the revolutionary tribunals he sarcastically said: "And yet the Cadets repeatedly charged me in the Duma with turning the tribunal into a weapon of political struggle. How far the Bolsheviks have left me behind?"

He was right, seeing that the Bolsheviks denied the chief factors of justice recognised in modern society, the independence of the courts from the authorities and politics, and the guidance of the judge by exact and definitely established laws.

Clause five of the decree declared that the tribunal was to be guided in its decisions and sentences by the

old laws " in so far as these laws were not cancelled by the Revolution, and do not contradict the revolutionary conscience and the revolutionary conception of right."

In a note to this clause it is explained how to distinguish existing laws from non-existing ones, seeing that there has been no official decree for the cancelling of all the laws.

> Cancelled are to be considered all laws contradicting the decrees of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet of Soldiers, Workmen, and Peasants, and of their Government, or the minimum programmes of the Russian Social Democratic Party, and of the Party of Social-Revolutionaries.

With one stroke of the pen the programmes of parties, written more for propaganda's sake than for use, obtained the force of law.

What new jurists were called on to see that the new justice should be carried out? In a detailed memorandum for the organisation of Soviet Justice[1] we find the following:

> Our Republic is based on the juridical consciousness of the masses, and not on the consciousness of the class of oppressors. It does not need to create legal principles or special laws, which would fetter the masses. On the contrary, it needs a law coming directly from the depths of the people. Neither does the Republic require a class of skilful and cunning jurists, who, under the outward guise of legality, defend the narrow interests of the propertied minority. It requires judges who know how correctly to reflect the people's juridical conscience, and who are interpreters not of their own conception of right, but only of that of the mass of the people themselves.

Such an attempt to elucidate the direct ideas of justice from the depth of the people's wisdom was

[1] *L'œuvre sociale et politique du Gouvernement Socialiste de Russie. Recueil de documents et d'actes.* Gónève. Official publication of the Soviet of the People's Commissaries.

undertaken even before the Bolsheviks came into power.

At the beginning of the first Revolution, when Kerensky was Minister of Justice, the Tribunal of the Justices of Peace (Police Courts), one of the best Russian juridical institutions, was subjected to a radical change. Besides the judge, elected by the Municipal Council, representatives of the workmen's class and soldiers elected by the local Soviets appeared in court. Thus the attempt to add representatives of the proletariat class to deal out justice was made at the time when the Revolutionary Democracy was in power. The High Courts were not abolished then, but their authority, particularly in the provinces, was greatly diminished. The *juges d'instruction* were not able to draw up their inquiries. The crowd forced its way into the cells, released the prisoners, and held the court officials under perpetual threat of violence. The sentences could not be served, because there was no police or administrative authority who could see that it was carried out.

But the Bolsheviks went farther. They not only abolished the old courts, but replaced them with new, the political meaning of which is quite definitely formulated in the decree :

> Revolutionary tribunals of workmen and peasants are instituted for fighting with the forces of counter-revolution, for the adoption of all measures to defend the Revolution and its conquests against them, and likewise for the settlement of special cases in connection with fighting against speculation, profiteering, and *sabotage*, and other misdeeds of merchants, industrials, officials, etc. These tribunals consist of a president and six members, elected by the Soviets.

The mixing up of political opponents (counter-revolution) and speculators in one category is one of

the methods habitually employed by the Bolsheviks to obscure the popular mind, and to lay the whole guilt for the economic ruin on the opponents of the Soviets. The hungry crowd, frequently without waiting for any tribunals, settled in its own way the cases of the so-called speculators, whose only fault often was that they were found in possession of several pounds of flour or sugar.

The revolutionary tribunals exercised judgement not so much upon the speculators as upon counter-revolutionaries, that is, the political enemies of Bolshevism. In Petrograd the tribunal started working at the end of December. One of the first cases dealt with was that of Countess Sophia Panin, who was under indictment for the embezzlement of 92,000 roubles.

The Soviet authorities had at their disposal all the buildings of the law-courts abolished by them, but with their customary longing for palaces they seized the small but pretty palace of the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch, former Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, and installed in it the new People's Tribunal. All the entrances were occupied by sentries armed with rifles, whose duty it was to check the passes, as nobody was allowed to enter without a permit. And yet on the day of the Countess Sophia Panin's trial the white and gold hall rapidly filled up. The audience consisted of friends of the accused, her colleagues on various public bodies, journalists and workmen who were attached to her through visiting the People's Palace she built for the workmen. There were also many lawyers. The Soviet had just abolished the Bar. When the lawyers met to discuss the situation, the sailors chased them away. The lawyers, however, had had time to pass a protest against the destruction of Russian justice, and decided that they would visit as

far as possible the sittings of the tribunal in order to fight by all means against it.

The trial of Countess Panin resembled a scene from a historic drama. She was an aristocrat by birth and position. After having given all her knowledge, energy, intelligence, and means to the interests of the democracy, this woman, whose working life and whole ambition aimed only at the education of her own people and the honour and freedom of Russia, was accused of embezzling State money. No direct charge of counter-revolution was made against her; but the Cadets, to whose party she belonged, were proclaimed enemies of the people. Her arrest and trial increased her popularity. The Petrograd University gave her an honorary doctor's degree. A series of protests, signed by organisations and individuals, appeared in the papers. The prosecution instituted against her revived in the public mind her twenty years of benevolent activity.

This woman, on whose side stood, it may be said without exaggeration, the whole of honest Russia, was being tried by a group of nobodies, elected by no one knew whom.

At the judges' table sat several men with unintelligent surly-looking countenances, partly in soldiers' tunics, and partly in workmen's clothes. They remained silent. The President, also a workman, tried to overcome his confusion so as not to lower the dignity of the revolutionary tribunal. But there was no real assurance either in him or in his comrades. What struck me was that there was no air of triumph in these victorious revolutionaries, but rather they seemed to feel guilty and ashamed. It was the same look as the Red Guards had, when some days after the *coup d'état*, they disarmed the indomitable Women's Battalion. Evidently the general and outspoken indignation had

at first a depressing effect, even on the Bolshevist Commissaries.

The trial of Countess Panin produced the impression that not she but the Soviet of People's Commissaries was at the Bar. All that was said in favour of the accused was an accusation against them. Her chief defender was a workman. With sincere emotion he narrated how, thanks to the accused, his whole life became changed. He had lived in darkness and emptiness until he met Countess Panin. She had taught him to read. It was in her People's Palace that he acquired general human interests; he there began to think, began to live for the sake of thought and truth, felt that joy of intellectual effort which may beautify any life. The workman finished with the words: "For all that you did for me and many of us I bow low to you."

During the reading of the protocol and the indictment Countess Panin remained calm and reserved. But when the workman bowed to her, she quickly covered her face with her hands to conceal her emotion. The prosecution and threats did not shake her. But the fervent gratitude which burst straight from the heart of one of her many pupils and living witnesses of her work touched her deeply. On the prisoner's bench she experienced that moral uplift which is the chief reward of a social worker, and supports him in the heavy days of trial.

In answer to the speech of the workman for the defence, another workman spoke as prosecutor. I have not the text of his speech, and probably no one has it, seeing that in this strange and eccentric court there were no shorthand writers, nor even a decent secretariat. But I can well recall the impression this prosecutor made on me. This was almost the first Bolshevik idealist I had heard during all those months of socialistic

inebriation. He was very young, scarcely more than twenty, and he spoke with that fervent belief in the righteousness of his cause which was burning in the speech of the defence.

"You say that citizen Panin is a noble woman, and has done much good for the people? Well, I don't wish to dispute this. We may leave her to be noble-minded, and I may even respect her for that. But she is acting against us, and for that we must destroy her. We are bringing forth a new gospel. We will be swept away, we will surely be swept off very soon, but we shall tell these tidings to the world, and we have to remove from our road all those who are against us, even if they be such good people as citizen Panin is, who has nevertheless appropriated the people's money, and ought to be made to suffer for that."

Even this speech, undoubtedly full of Bolshevist enthusiasm, had no effect on the judges. Their countenances remained sleepy and dull. They simply sat and waited to see what the President would order them to sign. And the President waited to see what the obscure lawyer Stuchka, now Commissary of Justice, would order him to sign. The latter, to the frank indignation of the audience, was fussing about in the hall, and finally disappeared into the judges' room to dictate to them the sentence they were to pass.

"Even Shcheglovitoff never went so far as to do this. He gave his orders by telephone, but never entered the consulting-room of the judges," said the lawyers who were present at the trial.

The prisoner only said a few words. She announced that she certainly did not count herself guilty, as she considered herself obliged not to give over to the Bolsheviks the people's money entrusted to her. Then, turning to the soldiers sitting at the judges' table, she

added: "I believe that you, who have repeatedly carried out military duty, will understand me better than any one. I was the sentry on guard, watching the people's goods. Could I abandon them without waiting for the changing of the guard? The Bolsheviks were for us not the next sentry, but bandits."

But the soldiers remained as before surly and resentful. No words, however fervent and sincere, had any effect on them. They knew quite well that it was not to mete out justice that they were brought to the palace of their former Commander-in-Chief, but only to pass sentence. They were indifferent to all the rest. The sentence was decided beforehand. Countess Panin was to remain in prison until she gave up 92,000 roubles.[1] In addition, "public censure" was pronounced on her. The whole audience applauded the prisoner. Public opinion throughout the Press condemned the judges, the sentence, and the Soviet Power which had arranged all the tragic comedy. Even Maxim Gorki's paper *Novaya Zhizn*, the unalterable enemy of the Cadets, wrote as follows:

> We believe that even the judges who passed the sentence never had any doubt whatever as to whom actually public censure will fall upon, whether on S. V. Panina, or on those who cast her into prison. Let it not be said that the prisoner had the sympathy of the bourgeois only. No, through the mouth of the workman Ivanoff (the defender), the little band of the proletariat intelligentsia of Russia declared that workmen's aristocracy who knows what culture is and has learnt how to appreciate its agents in our intellectually poor country.

Two days later another trial was held in the same palace which aroused great excitement in Petrograd. This time it was General Boldyreff, the Commander of

[1] Her friends paid in the money for Countess Panin. She was released from prison. Now she is conducting political work together with other Russian patriots in the south of Russia, for the regeneration of her country.

the Fifth Army who was being tried. He was accused of sabotaging the Soviet Power, of crimes committed against the Revolution and the people, which consisted in the fact that the General did not answer the summons of ensign Krylenko, did not recognise his authority, and refused to give him troops to fight with Kerensky.

General Boldyreff explained that he acted on the decision of the Army Committee, who did not wish to submit to the demands of one party.

"I have always considered that the army exists not for parties, but for the defence of the whole country, and as the Fifth Army was defending the approaches to Petrograd, it was dangerous to move it from its positions."

This happened before the conclusion of peace. The counsel for the defence, one of whom was a soldier, member of the Committee of the Fifth Army, pointed out the military merits of General Boldyreff to the judges, declaring that throughout the campaign he shared all the hardships with the soldiers, and when in combat frequently marched at the head of his unit. Moreover, General Boldyreff was a real democrat, a peasant's son, who had made his way not by protection, but by his own work.

The defending soldier argued that if they tried General Boldyreff, then the whole Army Committee should be tried, since they all acted in complete agreement. The political significance of the trial was still more clearly emphasised by the President's question to the accused:

"If the Army Committee had recognised Krylenko as Commander, would you have submitted to him?"

"I consider imperative upon me only the will of the Russian people expressed through the Constituent Assembly," answered the General in a firm voice.

He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

A great outburst of anger arose in the hall. All rose to their feet and cries were heard of: "Shame! Gendarmes! This is worse than autocracy! Poor Russia!"

The defending soldier came up to the General and saluting him said: "Never mind, General, you will be released before the three years are up."

All caught up the word: "Before! long before!"[1]

A much less severe sentence was passed on another prisoner, for whom the uniform of a Russian officer was only a disguise, concealing a most dishonest adventurer.

This was the case of Colonel Schneur. The indictment against him was "that being shamelessly disgraced through his criminal relations with the Department of Police, he, Schneur, became the executant of important and responsible orders of the Soviet authorities, thereby knowingly prejudicing and compromising them."

The name of Lieutenant Schneur appeared for the first time in the papers in November, when a Soviet official *communiqué* was published to the effect that on 13th November three *parlementaires*, with Lieutenant Schneur at their head, had been sent over to the Germans. Subsequently, on 7th December a scandalous disclosure was published in the newspaper *Dien*. In this well-informed socialistic organ, L. Lvoff (a well-known journalist) conducted a campaign of bold exposure, very dangerous to him and his paper, daily publishing a series of scandalous proceedings characterising the Bolshevist agents.

[1] Fortunately they were right. General Boldyreff is free, and together with Admiral Kolchak has organised a Russian Army in Siberia, which is now fighting against Trotsky and his Red soldiers.

Schneur also found his way into this unattractive portrait gallery, where ruffians, informers, political traitors, and mere blackguards crowded one after another. Lieutenant Schneur, who had been put out of the army some time before for unseemly acts, at once occupied a place among the Soviet notables. After his journey to the Germans as a *parlementaire* he got an appointment on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, Krylenko, who, before all army ranks were cancelled, promoted him to the rank of colonel.

And suddenly a long letter appeared in the Press, written by Schneur in 1910 from Paris to the Department of Police, in which he offered his services as a secret agent. He boasted in this letter of his close relations with prominent Russian revolutionaries, and assured the Tsar police that he could at any time occupy a central place in their midst in order to keep a watch over them. "My only wish is to inflict a decisive blow on the Russian Revolution." This application did not succeed. The Tsar's Department of Police rejected Schneur's overtures. But fortune still awaited him in the future. Circumstances changed during the eight years. In his speech at the trial Schneur said: "My life, in its variety and brightness, represents a cinematograph ribbon of 50,000 metres long." And in truth his life resembled the adventures of the criminal heroes who flash so frequently before the eyes of the spectator in a cinema. Schneur, though only for a short time, did succeed in obtaining a central position among the revolutionaries. On the recommendation of Trotsky, Schneur was appointed Chief of Staff of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. There were many such shady heroes as he was in the suite, but for some reason or other the Bolsheviks were more severe to Schneur than to the others, and he was arrested and tried.

At the trial Krylenko, who had previously befriended him and given him a high and responsible post, gave now a very disdainful and unfavourable report about his former subordinate.

The newspaper *Dien*, in exposing Lieutenant Schneur, said quite plainly that this gentleman, who was so unsuccessful in the offer of his services as secret police agent, was much more successful when he offered his services to the German Intelligence Department. And Krylenko in his evidence said :

" Schneur entered into unnecessary negotiations with the German Generals, took part in their luncheon parties and attempted to make speeches. There was so much doubt as to Schneur's devotion to the public cause, that suspicion arose as to his possible connection with the German agents."

These suspicions did not prevent the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army from promoting Schneur Colonel—" to get rid of him, as he was too much of an annoyance . . ., but every one regarded this as humorous," and eventually from taking Colonel Schneur to the Headquarters and make him Chief of Staff.

This disgraceful evidence of Krylenko is one of the many proofs of his criminal attitude to the Russian Army. Its organisation, leaders, fate, and honour were for him only objects of derision. In this mockery there were features that touch the limits of insanity.

When at Headquarters it was discovered that Schneur had been in communication with the secret police, he was arrested and about to be tried, which means to be shot. Eventually they changed their mind. Dukhonin and other honest officers they at once subjected to the cruel fate, without thinking twice. But Schneur, a spy, traitor and *provocateur*, awoke in them pity.

The revolutionary tribunal likewise pitied him and passed on him a very lenient sentence: "To deprive Schneur of his civil rights and of public confidence and to expel him beyond the boundaries of the Russian Federal Republic for ever!"

Nearly every one of the tribunal's sittings was marked by conflicts between the judges and the public who formed the audience. The return to the wildest forms of trial, deprived of guarantees, without laws, without regular procedure or inquiry, even without the presentation to the prisoner of the indictment against him, naturally awoke general protest. Public indignation found its expression in the speeches of attorneys and lawyers and in the outcries of members in the audience. More than once the angry and outraged President ordered the soldiers to clear the hall. The locks in the rifles were then heard to click, and it seemed that in addition to moral violence against law and right, physical violence would be committed against the protesting audience.

In the winter of 1918 the chiefs of Bolshevism still refrained from wholesale murders. At least it was so in Moscow and Petrograd. But in the provinces the wildest cruelties, the wickedest and most senseless crimes were committed in the name of the revolutionary tribunal. The papers were full of such reports. I take the first paper that comes into my hand, the Socialist Revolutionary *Volia Strany*, which contains a report from the village of Sosnovka in the Saratov Province.

A shoemaker refused to let a band of soldiers into his house in the night. They tried to break in. The shoemaker shot at them. The military tribunal then sentenced him to capital punishment by cutting off his head. The sentenced man asked to see a priest. This was refused to him. But his wife and two little daughters were brought to him. The scene of farewell

was heart-rending. The most awful thing was that the execution took place in the presence of the family. As there were no experienced executioners then, it took ten whole minutes for one of the soldiers to cut the head off. At last he finished! The wife went mad. A whole series of similar cases of the most brutal application of force instead of law could be cited.

In addition to military tribunals, the taking of hostages was instituted. Professors, merchants, teachers, ministers, officers, workmen, priests, all indeed were arrested who were not sufficiently yielding. In some cases all the more or less notable men of the town were put in prison, so that "the counter-revolution should not dare raise its head." In some cases simply those were imprisoned for whom a ransom could be paid. To a certain extent the arrested Ministers were meant to be hostages. The Bolsheviks frankly said that if the Soviet Power was overthrown the Ministers would be made to pay dearly for that. By degrees, as civil war spread and the rule of the Bolsheviks acquired a more sanguinary character, the institution of hostages also became stained with blood. Frequently a whole family was made to answer for one of its members.[1]

In the meanwhile criminality grew to a shocking extent. In Petrograd alone, in January 1918, 15,000 robberies took place in private apartments, and 9300 thefts from shops and 135 murders were committed. These crimes awoke an echo in all classes of society. As there were no courts of justice, the dangerous conviction grew in every average comparatively quiet man that he must settle not only his own grievances by punishing his offender, but also deal with any criminal he met in the street. All over Russia, not excepting the

[1] In October 1918 the wife of the former mayor of Moscow, Rudneff, was locked up in a Moscow gaol. He had fled and she was imprisoned as hostage.

capitals, a ruthless death-penalty was inflicted on the thief caught red-handed. They were killed like mad dogs in the streets, at the market, or stations, wherever they were caught. Sometimes they were shot, sometimes beaten to death, or thrown into the water when near a river. Frequently the real thief would get away, particularly in the case of a professional, and instead of him the infuriated crowd would get hold of an innocent man and make him pay for the crime.

The people in the street dealt as cruelly with those who were suspected of being speculators, particularly in food-stuffs, which were growing more and more scarce and more difficult to obtain.

One evening in a well-frequented street, the Liteinaia, in Petrograd, I encountered an extraordinary procession. I could not at first make out what it meant. A crowd of youngsters, women, soldiers, and civilians with cries and threats were surrounding a cart in which some men were standing and supporting a peculiar object, resembling a scarecrow. This object, thickly covered with rags and bits of paper, was kept standing upright on a barrel, and at each jolt swayed to all sides like a doll or a lifeless body. A pot was thrust over its head covering its face. From out of the pot some pitch was dripping on to the rags. Only the movements of the hands clutching convulsively at this or that neighbour, made me see that it was not a doll but a man.

"Whatever is the matter?" I asked one of the women standing by.

"A speculator has been caught," she answered with great excitement. "He's been hoarding up sour cream in his shop. We'll teach him how to do so."

She hurried on, exasperated, but at the same time relieved. This savage act of meting out justice clarified the anger that was boiling in the half-famished popula-

tion, and even afforded them a sense of moral satisfaction. The State rulers had ceased dealing out justice and punishing the wrongdoers.

The crowd created for itself a substitute for justice, hideous, blind and merciless, but it eased the darkened conscience of the people.

It should be said that these lynchings and settlements with profiteers, robbers, speculators, horse-thieves, pickpockets, and other transgressors against what remained in the people's mind as right, and especially the claims of property, began long before the Bolshevist régime, at the time of the Provisional Government. All State service having fallen to pieces, there was nobody to see that the laws should be observed.

Revolution in itself is the negation of all old laws, and an effort to put something new in place of the old. But everyday life demands the immediate settlement of various conflicts and misdeeds. Hence the revolutionary crowds act for themselves. The Bolsheviks have only increased and deepened these conditions, having formally abolished the old law-courts. Here, as in everything, they evinced that mixture of dogmatic demagogy, and simple criminality, which forms the characteristic peculiarity of Bolshevism.

The Provisional Government fought against the spirit of destruction, against hostilities to the State and society, against low and sometimes brutal instincts by words of persuasion, not as an authority who makes demands and punishes evildoers with the sword, but as a priest with a cross in his hand and a sermon on his lips. The Bolsheviks have recognised all the outbursts of the lower instincts of society as a lawful manifestation of the revolutionary will, and in their speeches and articles praised them, particularly when the cruelty

shown was part of the class struggle on which Bolshevism built its social relations.

The Soviet Power deprived of the right to act and the possibility of expressing their views those who disagreed with it, and tried to sober and clear the people's mind and conscience. After having destroyed the people's representation, they took away freedom of speech. The struggle with the Press lasted several months.

By means of an armed rising the Bolsheviks threw down the Provisional Government in which their own comrades, the Socialists, were in a majority. The power was seized, but literate, thinking, and especially writing Russia would not submit to the usurpers, whereupon the Bolsheviks simply decided to shut the mouths of their opponents.

On November 10th, the day when the decree on the establishment of the Soviet Power appeared, another decree was issued regarding the Press, which may be called a decree for the muzzling of the Press.

In the grave and decisive hour of the change of Government, and the days following them, the Temporary Revolutionary Committee was compelled to adopt a series of measures against the counter-revolutionary press of various shades. Immediately on all sides cries were raised that the new power was violating the fundamental principle of its programme, encroaching on the freedom of the press. The Workmen's and Peasants' Government draws the attention of the people to the fact that this Liberal screen in our midst actually conceals the liberty of the propertied classes, who have taken into their hands the lion's share of the whole press, in order to be able, unhindered, to poison the minds, and to bring confusion into the consciousness, of the masses. Every one knows that the bourgeois press is one of the most powerful weapons of the *bourgeoisie*. At the critical moment when the new power, that of the workmen and peasants, is taking firm hold, it was impossible to leave the weapon

entirely in the hands of the enemy at a time when it is as dangerous as bombs and machine-guns. For this reason provisional measures have been taken for cutting off the flood of mud and slander in which the yellow and green press would have willingly drowned the young conquest of the people. As soon as the new régime takes firm root, all administrative repressive measures will stop. Complete freedom will be given it within the boundaries of responsibility, in accordance with the widest and most progressive law in this respect.

And pending this freedom the papers will be closed for the following offences:

(1) For inciting to open public resistance or to disobedience to the Government; (2) for sowing troubles, by means of an obviously slanderous distortion of the facts; (3) for inciting to acts which are of a criminal character and liable to punishment.

The first two points were well known to the Russian Press, seeing that under Tsarism all prosecutions against the Press were based on accusations of sowing trouble, and of disobedience to the authorities. The third point provoked an involuntary smile; under its provisions the Bolshevist Press should have been the first to be closed, since it incited to murder and looting.

At least in those days the Bolsheviks tried to justify themselves.

At the sitting of the Central Executive Committee on November 16th the following resolution regarding the Press was adopted:

The closure of the bourgeois papers was caused not only by the purely fighting requirements in the period of the rising and the suppression of counter-revolutionary attempts, but likewise as a necessary temporary measure for the establishment of a new régime in the sphere of the press, under which the capital proprietors of printing-works and paper would not be able to become autocratic beguilers of public opinion. . . . The re-establishment of the so-called freedom of the press, viz. the

simple return of printing-offices and paper to capitalists, poisoners of the people's conscience, would be an unpermissible surrender to the will of capital, *i.e.* a counter-revolutionary measure.

The Right Socialists, who were then still in the Committee, protested. Trotsky, in supporting this resolution, said, "Under conditions of civil war the prohibition of newspapers is a lawful measure. . . . Those measures which are employed to frighten individuals must be applied to the Press also. . . . All the resources of the Press must be handed over to the Soviet Power. You say that formerly we demanded freedom of the Press for the *Pravda*? But then we were in a position to demand a minimum programme; now we insist on the maximum programme. When the power was in the hands of the *bourgeoisie* we demanded juridical freedom of the Press. When the power is held by the workmen and peasants — we must create conditions for the freedom of the Press." (*Pravda*, 18th November.)

These were not accidental speeches uttered in the heat of debate, but a programme which Trotsky and his colleagues carried out to the end. Never since the Russian Press existed has it had to suffer such prosecutions and insults. In this, as in all other spheres of life, Socialist despotism proved to be far harsher than that of the Tsar. The old régime still reckoned with the law, public opinion, and a certain code of morals. The Bolsheviks cast all this aside as being bourgeois prejudices. His Majesty the Proletariat must monopolise public opinion. His voice alone might be heard in the country. All other human speech must be silenced. This assumption was made as the foundation of the Bolshevist-Socialistic conception of the world. On it they built, as it seemed to them, a new life, which in

reality threw back Russia to the fifteenth century, if not earlier. They trampled with the fury of fanatics on the most precious inheritance of humanity, freedom of thought and speech.

From the beginning of the Bolshevist rule Russian journalists of all opinions, both Socialists and Radicals, became real martyrs. Sailors armed to the teeth, Red Guards in wolf-skin caps—perhaps the same who killed Dukhonin—forced their way into the printing-works, scattered about the type, made havoc of all papers and documents, arrested the staff, and frequently the workmen also, exercised violence over defenceless people whose only weapon was free speech. After such exploits the victors sometimes went off, and sometimes installed themselves in the printing-works and newspaper-offices to prevent the counter-revolutionaries from addressing their readers again.

The Smolny tried not to interfere in these outrages, and to divest themselves of all responsibility. The members of the editorial office had no physical possibility of making the brigands produce any document proving their right to make such raids. In some cases, however, the raiders produced a document. It is not difficult to make up an order in a country where each committee, whether that of a town, a district, a region, or a house, represents a separate authority, or, as they say in Russia, a separate Sovdepia.[1] Any one of these committees and Soviets issued documents, passports, permits, orders. A seal was affixed, and below it an illegible signature. With that kind of document in their hands, bold people passed through all the closed doors, forced everybody to obey them, and took all they wanted.

[1] This word, which is a contraction from SOViet of the Workmen's DEPuties, has acquired rights of citizenship in Russia, and the entire part of Russia seized by the Bolsheviks and held under the power of the Soviets is called "Sovdepia."

To newspaper-offices they came not with documents, but simply with rifles. In November, during the elections for the Constituent Assembly, the Cadets wished to issue an evening paper, *Borba* (Struggle). I took part in it. We began the paper in a sharply outspoken, oppositional tone. On the very first evening our paper was bought wholesale on the Nevsky. And on the same evening several schoolboys selling it were arrested. It was only on the second day that the Red Guards discovered the printing-office where the *Borba* was being printed, and arrived there in an armed crowd. They broke to pieces the set-up type. They tore to bits a batch of Cadet electoral proclamations and handbills, and spoilt the printing-machines with their bayonets.

When I arrived on the next day, such a chaos reigned in the spacious premises of the printing-office as if a herd of oxen had trampled through it. I passed on into the compositors' room. The workmen stood near the boxes sullen and angry. The printers' workmen in Russia, as everywhere, belong to the most developed and best organised class. Their trade union existed even in the time of Tsarism.

I knew that most of the compositors were much more to the Left than I. There were Social-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats among them. I thought that after such a raid not one of them would wish to risk himself for the sake of a Cadet electoral sheet.

"What have your comrades done here yesterday?" I asked.

A unanimous indignant outcry came from them in answer:

"Comrades, you say? They are no comrades of ours. They are hooligans, robbers, policemen, worse than the Tsar's policemen."

The workmen gathered round me and told me of the raid made by the Reds, of their threats, of their ignorance, and kept on saying :

" No comrades of ours, policemen and nothing else."

" Well, that means the end of our paper, they threaten to arrest all of you ? " said I.

" An end to the paper ? By no means ! How dare they gag us ? If you, the newspaper staff, are not afraid, we don't mean to surrender. So decide for yourself."

Scores of eyes were looking questions at me.

" What's there to decide ? We must fight and not keep silent ! We will soon give you the material."

I saw a light flash over their frowning faces, and I understood that in spite of all party differences and prejudices—in spite of the fact that my colleagues and I represented the bourgeois party to these people, a general thirst for freedom and a common indignation against the oppressors bound us together. And I must say that those moments passed with the workmen in the raided printing-office gave me then that stimulating feeling of solidarity which is essential for public work. But thinking of these compositors now, I wonder, with a heavy heart, what Bolshevist Russia has done to them ? Has she killed them physically by starvation or with a bullet, or killed their spirit, that proud human feeling of independence which so clearly marked our printers ? It is that feeling which the Bolsheviks cannot stand in any one.

Notwithstanding the workmen's courage, we issued only three numbers. Eventually the Reds came and placed a sentry in the printing-office. They were stronger than we. The work had to be stopped. *Borba* (the Struggle) was ended.

These repressive measures were not specially

directed against the bourgeois or Cadet Press. The Bolsheviks viewed with the same intolerance all their opponents, without any indulgence to their comrade Socialists, whom indeed they treated more contemptuously, calling them Social-Patriots.

On the 30th November, in one night, searches were made and ten newspapers were closed—*Nasha Rech*, *Sovremennoie Delo*, *Utro*, *Rabochaia Gazeta*, *Volia Naroda*, *Trudovoe Slovo*, *Edinstvo*, and *Rabotcheie Delo*, the last six Socialist. One of the best printing-offices in Petrograd, belonging to Suvorin, where three newspapers were published, was requisitioned for the *Soldatskaia Pravda*.

This time it was not the freak of some enterprising committee, but the order came from the Inquiry Commission of the Military Revolutionary Committee. All the Socialist Committees entered a protest, including the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic party to which the Bolsheviks had belonged.

The Central Committee of the Social-Democratic party decided "to bring to the knowledge of all the members of the party that the central organ of the party, the *Rabochaia Gazeta*, is closed by the Military Revolutionary Committee. While branding this as an arbitrary act in defiance of the Russian and international proletariat, committed by so-called Socialists on a Social-Democrat paper, and the Labour Party, whose organ it is, the Central Committee has decided to call upon the party to organise a movement of protest against this act in order to open the eyes of the labour masses to the character of the régime which governs the country."

But the workmen's eyes were opened, only much later, and as yet were fixed exclusively on the Bolsheviks, who continued their policy of frightfulness, which was

incomparably more drastic than that of the Tsar's régime. Lenin outdid Stolypin.

In November, immediately after the accession of Lenin and Trotsky to power, all the newspapers were closed. Little by little they appeared, then were again closed, either wholesale or separately. The editors had to conduct humiliating negotiations with the Smolny. Their papers appeared under new names. They had to change printing-offices, and altogether lived under martial law, under a continuous menace of closure, searches, arrest, and personal violence against the entire staff, from the editor down to the humblest workman.

In February again all the papers were prohibited. But for some reason the chief Cadet paper, *Nash Viek* (the former *Rech*), was still allowed to appear. This made the editorial staff feel very uncomfortable. Many of them thought that it was wrong to benefit by the right of appearing, no one knew why, when all the other organs of Russian thought were condemned to silence. Still it was decided to continue the paper. This was the only tribune from which the voice of reason and conscience could be heard. Under what conditions the staff worked may be judged from the fact that when on the eve of my departure from Russia, in March, I went to *Nash Viek*, to which I regularly contributed, and took with me a short paragraph on a women's meeting at which Mme. Kollontay, a zealous Bolshevist leader and Minister of Public Welfare, spoke, the editor, a friend of mine, said, "It is very interesting, but if we publish it we shall have the sailors coming here with bayonets."

And he was right. All the articles were considered in that light: Would the Reds come with their bayonets or not?

In spite of this, the Russian journalists, with an

unyielding stubbornness, with the courage of real soldiers, led an unequal and obdurate struggle against the Bolsheviks, refuting their errors and exposing their crimes, the falseness of their ideas, and the lunacy or treachery of their leaders. Many mistakes, many slips, many weaknesses and blunders were committed by the Russian Press during the first happy period of the Russian Revolution. But when the cruel days of the Bolshevist reaction arrived, those same journalists showed that those were errors of logic and not of conscience. They did not go into the camp of the victors, would make no concessions or compromise. This was a real heroic struggle not only for freedom of speech, but for a free united Russia. And the Russian intelligentsia has the right to say with pride that in the darkest year of the fierce tyranny the Russian journalists, literally at the risk of their lives, remained at their posts, standing out for the real interests of the people against a band of fanatics, traitors, and hypocrites.

There was much embitterment in this struggle, without speaking of the dangers. The well-known publicist, B. Miakotin, one of the editors of the popular Socialistic review, *Russkoe Bogatstvo*, belonging to the party of the Populist-Socialists, was in the printing-office of the *Volia Naroda* when the Reds broke in. They behaved with violence, threw about the type, and took away the manuscripts. B. Miakotin had suffered imprisonment and was sent to exile during the Tsar's régime. He was really of the Left, irreconcilable to the last degree, and even considered the Cadets as not sufficiently democratic. Seeing how the agents of the Socialistic Government were behaving with his paper, B. Miakotin cried out indignantly, "I would have preferred to see my paper closed by the gendarmes of the Tsar than by these hooligans."

And the hooligans continued their destructive work. They tried to weaken the Press by means of threats, arrests, and prosecutions of journalists. This was of no avail. They made advertisements a Government monopoly, having correctly reckoned that this would be a heavy material blow to the papers. But even this was of no avail, seeing that the journalists made every sacrifice provided they had some means of expressing themselves. The Bolsheviks requisitioned most of the printing-offices and the paper. But seeing that most of the printers were opposed to the Soviet, there was always some way of printing a paper. Finally, in July 1918, the Bolsheviks definitely, as they say themselves, closed the papers for ever. Since then in the part of Russia seized by them there is no Press, except the official Bolshevist organs. The dictatorship of the proletariat, as the Bolsheviks themselves call their régime, has killed the freedom of the Press, or better to say killed the Press itself. So it became clear that free, human speech, the foundation of civilised comity, as indeed of all other liberties, of all the fundamental rights of the man and citizen, was incompatible with a Socialistic State.

The Bolshevist power showed that any despotism, whether that of the Tsar or of Socialism, is compelled to have recourse to identical repressive measures, and make use of the same terminology.

In addressing the Moslems, Lenin generously promised them the inviolability of their beliefs and customs. But with regard to the ruling religion among the Russian people, the Orthodox Church, the Soviet of the People's Commissaries did not deem fit to observe this inviolability. It displayed not only disrespect, but derision for the religious feeling of Orthodox people.

The Revolution brought great trials to the Orthodox

Church. During the first period, it is true, she was treated with great consideration. To protect her interests and to effect within her the necessary reforms a new Ministry was created, called the Ministry of Cults, under the direction of a gifted young philosopher, Anton Kartasheff. He was the very man for the post. With a small group of writers and scholars he had long endeavoured to arouse the Orthodox Church from her lethargy, and to set new ideals before her ignorant and indolent priests.

After the Revolution all their discussions bore fruit. Kartasheff, as Minister of Public Worship, was able to give practical effect to the proposals for Church reform. It was not easy work. The clergy, bewildered by the Revolution, unaccustomed either to think or to act, were a feeble support. When at the end of August a Church Council met in Moscow, for the first time for two hundred years, the event was barely noticed by the general public, absorbed as it was in the whirl of revolutionary politics. For the first two weeks the proceedings were languid and formal. But the guns of the Bolshevist insurrection roused the spirit of the Church. To the sound of the bombardment of the Kremlin the Council elected a Patriarch.

The Bolsheviks were not slow in showing their hostility to the Church. Kartasheff, with the other members of the Provisional Government, was thrown into the fortress, where for four months he lay under the constant menace of death. In Tsarskoye Selo, when Kerensky's troops were fighting the Red Guard, a priest ventured to pray publicly for the cessation of civil strife. The Reds took him out into a square and shot him before the eyes of his son. But these were isolated acts. Later the Church was subjected to systematic persecution.

On 27th January a hundred armed sailors entered

the Alexander Nevsky Monastery, declaring that they had come to inspect the buildings and requisition them for hospital purposes. The order came from the Commissary for Social Welfare, Madame Kollontay, a militant atheist, whose logical capacity is not so strong as her revolutionary ardour.

The appearance of Bolshevist soldiers within the monastery enclosure aroused intense excitement among the parishioners. On 2nd February fifteen soldiers came with a commissary appointed to take over the buildings. When they demanded the keys of Bishop Prokopius the church bells rang out. At once several thousands of men and women, including a few soldiers, ran to the rescue. The Reds were disarmed and arrested; machine-gunners were sent to relieve them, and in the shooting that followed a priest named Skipetroff was mortally wounded.

Now the Alexander Nevsky Monastery had its martyr, and the sins of the monks were forgotten. The monastery at once became a centre of that new piety of suffering in which the people, worn out by the constant disturbances and the conflicting appeals of endless political orators, sought support and comfort, counsel and repose. On the following Sunday a great Church procession was arranged as a protest against the sacrilege and murder, and all the churches of Petrograd were invited to take part.

Never, not even in the first days of the war, had the cold, sceptical capital seen such an outburst of religious fervour. About 200,000 people thronged the square before the Kazan Cathedral and the neighbouring streets. Church banners waved like standards of a new army; above the sea of people rose the familiar figures of the saints on hundreds and hundreds of icons; and the whole procession moved to the Alexander

Nevsky Monastery singing prayers and psalms. Though it was the depth of winter, they sang most loudly and earnestly of all the Easter prayer, "Christ is risen from the dead." It was as though they looked for a miracle. And not in vain. These thousands of people, differing so in position, education, and ideas, but united in one powerful religious impulse, themselves without knowing it, constituted a miracle of ecclesiastical revival. And the centre of this miracle was that same Alexander Nevsky Monastery which had seemed hopelessly petrified in official splendour and worldly wealth. The wave of revival spread all over Russia, from town to town, bringing strength and courage and enlightenment.

But the Bolsheviks were intent on carrying out their programme. On the eve of this Church procession, which aroused and amazed Petrograd, they published their decree for the separation of Church and State. Intrinsically there is nothing criminal in the idea of separation; it is obviously a question for frank and simple discussion; but the decree came from a band of usurpers, most of whom were not even Orthodox. It was imposed on the people. Its whole tone, and still more the acts of the Soviet Government, were imbued with hostility to the Church. The Church was deprived of all her rights, and was not so much separated from the State as placed in complete subjection to the secular power. "Ecclesiastical and religious societies have no right to own property. All properties of ecclesiastical and religious societies existing in Russia are declared to be the property of the people. Buildings and objects intended for use in religious services are to be handed over by a special decree of the local or central authorities for use, free of charge, by the corresponding religious society."

That is to say, if the secular authorities so will it,

the doors of a church may be closed in the face of the parishioners. In a supplementary order Madame Kollontay explained: "Church services may be continued if a petition to that effect is made by the *collective of believers*—a typically Bolshevist perversion of the Russian language—who must pledge themselves to undertake the repair and maintenance of the buildings and staff."

By all these orders the freedom of conscience proclaimed at the beginning of the Revolution was abolished. It is worth noting that these measures applied only to the Orthodox Church. Other religious communities, such as the Lutherans, Mohammedans, Jews, and others were untouched.

Having in mind how submissively the Russian Church accepted her degradation at the hands of Rasputin it might have been thought that she would meekly endure anything. But one of the causes of the submission of the Church authorities to Rasputin was the fact that the Tsar was the official head of the Church. Now they were their own masters; they were free to act, and they rose in indignant protest. Their one head was the Patriarch, and they listened to his voice. He declared his will firmly. In reply to the separation decree, the Church Council in Moscow formally anathematised the Bolsheviks. To all the churches was sent an epistle from the Patriarch cursing the usurpers as "sons of perdition," who were crucifying the Church and had sold Russia to the hereditary enemy of the Slavs—Germany.

This epistle of the Patriarch is the boldest and most solemn and public protest that has yet been made against the Bolshevist Power.

It was impossible to print it in full. The papers that printed extracts from it were punished with fines and suspension. Moscow expected that the Patriarch

himself would be arrested, but the Bolsheviks did not dare.

Like all the Bolshevist decrees, the decree for the separation of the Church was not systematically carried out. But the attitude of the Government encouraged all the elements of anarchy and disorder, and the transfer of the churches and monasteries to the local Soviets in many cases gave the mob a welcome opportunity for plunder. Churches were robbed. In the Kremlin itself, where at every gate and at every corner stood a Bolshevist guard, "unknown" robbers carried off from the Patriarch's sacristy in the Cathedral of the Assumption tens of millions' worth of ancient Church treasures. Naturally the robbers were not discovered. More than that, priests were insulted and beaten, bishops were imprisoned, church processions were violently dispersed, and in Kiev the Metropolitan Vladimir was shot dead.

The attitude of the people to the various anti-Church measures—for instance, to the new institute of civil marriage and simplified divorce—is one of distrust. There was considerable excitement last May when the registers of births, deaths, and marriages were taken from the churches. The Soviet Government found it necessary to appeal to the population of Moscow, on 22nd May, in a long declaration, in which they explain that they have established complete liberty of conscience. Every man may believe as he chooses. "But the Church controlled not only the souls of men, but a large capital. The people paid its last farthing for gold settings for icons, diamond headgear, all the splendour of the churches, all the luxury in which the Church authorities bathed. The People's Commissaries have taken all this from the churchmen and given it back to the people. Let the workmen and peasants dispose of Church property and not the clerical authorities."

Thus here, too, the principles of the dictatorship of the proletariat were applied. The churches were placed at the disposal, not of the faithful, not of the parish, not of those who cared for the church and for the means of worship, but of those who had seized power by force of arms. So invaders sometimes treat an alien religion in a conquered land.

But the men who call themselves the People's Government fought the Church as a political and social enemy. "The Church has always served the rich and not the poor, and therefore when the ancient oppressors started a campaign against the workers," so continues this declaration, written in a clumsy imitation of the popular style, "the managers of the Church went with the oppressors. They raised the cry that the Soviet Government was polluting holy things, oppressing the faith, robbing Church property. They rang the curfew, organised religious processions, called on the faithful to revolt, cursed the People's Government, provoked fighting and pogroms. On the pretext of defending Church property they attacked the workers and tried to destroy their freedom. They begin by lying, and then call on the people to commit crimes."

There is a strange irony in the charge that the Church is destroying the liberty of the workers when all liberty is destroyed in Russia, when not only the body of the Orthodox Church, but the body of the whole Russian land, is torn asunder by the formula proclaimed by Karl Marx in his famous Communist manifesto: "Expropriate the expropriators."

But surely, if there is a vital principle in the Church, the loss of material goods will not weaken, but strengthen her. And that is just what is happening in the Russian Church. Within her, new leaders are coming to the front, new characters are being formed; and from

without there are gravitating to her honest patriots who long for the resurrection of a united Russia. Among the Orthodox are people of various classes and various political views; but it is possible that there are few Socialists among them, and that is a cause of alarm to those who wish to see Russia continuing her Socialistic experiments.

In the people, certainly, a great change has taken place. Some have yielded to the temptation of a cheap atheism. Others, on the contrary, came closer to the Church and valued it as one of the few remaining embodiments of Holy Russia.

On one of the Sundays in January 1918 I went out, after morning service, from the ancient Chudov Monastery in the Kremlin. Its red-brick walls were mutilated with traces of bombardment. On the walls, over the windows, and under the roof pieces were torn out. That had happened in the November days, when the Bolsheviks were attacking the Whites who had sought refuge in the Kremlin. The Kremlin was bombarded from the Vorobyevy Hills. The shells hit the palace, the Church of the Twelve Apostles, blew off the head of one of the towers, pierced the cupola of the ancient Uspensky Cathedral. But the Chudov Monastery, in which was situated at one time the Patriarchal School—this symbol of the first Russian University—suffered most of all. The old walls, built as far back as in the fifteenth century, withstood the siege. The church remained whole, and in it, as in all the Kremlin churches in that winter, the customary services were held. The churches and the great spaces in front of them were crowded with people.

Below, near the archway of the monastery, voices were heard humming. Disputes went on—the confusing, agitating discussions which for a whole year

have filled Russia with the noise and strife of verbal chaos. This time they were not foreign comments, nor bookish echoes, but deep-felt sentiments arising from the very bottom of the troubled sea. Women's voices sounded louder and more assertive than the men's.

"They want everything for themselves," shouted a young woman, evidently closing a series of arguments; "it will be necessary to get these out also. And who will suffer from all this? Again we. Again the people. And they will certainly run away."

"They'll run away! they'll run away!" passed as an echo through the crowd.

An angry soldier's bass voice interjected and put the question, which seemed absurd, but was very near to this crowd:

"You just tell me, have you seen the Cadets in the trenches? They fought here; but have you seen them in the trenches?"

Another woman's voice with a note of hysteria answered sharply:

"Well, what of that, that they were Cadets? They protected our Holy things. They did right. For you they are nothing; only stones: for us they are Holy. And we shall defend them to the last."

"But who touched your Holy things?"

A storm of voices arose all round. Not so much angry, as reproachful words flew out:

"But look at our cathedrals. And what have you done in our Alexander Nevsky Monastery? . . . And who killed the priest? Have they a God at all? . . . They behave as if accursed by the power of Anti-Christ. . . ."

At the other end a man's hoarse and hasty voice was heard attacking:

"Well, that's what I say, enough of all christenings.

I don't wish, you understand, to be christened. That's why the law was issued.[1] Why christening ? We must drop it. I don't wish it."

An aged woman with a shawl over her head stood up on her tip-toes the better to see the scoffer. She then turned to me and said with contempt in her voice :

" I knew it. He has a dark face. They all have dark faces."

This is how she probably saw it. It was however not at all dark, but the most ordinary grey soldier's face ; young and unbearded ; strained with the arduous, to him unaccustomed, verbal struggle. The soldier sincerely believed that he was in the right. But around him stood indignant people thinking otherwise. It was not so much their words as their malevolent looks that pricked the soldier like needles. And one could not even call the opponents bourgeois, they were of the same class as himself. The soldier got angry, and in repelling the attacks on him grew more violent.

" Well, don't get christened. Who forces you to it ? But do no violence against others ; don't prevent them from believing in God if they wish to," calmly said a man of an intelligent aspect.

" Ah ! so ; now it means do no violence . . . And when violence was done against me, where were you ? When my blood was sucked, didn't you see it ? "

" Who sucked it ? Have we done so ? What's the use of talking such nonsense ? "

An aged woman said with contempt :

" May be the Holy things sucked your blood ; that's why you attacked our Orthodox Church."

" Well, I won't have them christen me. . . . Let them try, and I will christen them. . . ."

[1] The law was, that all the registers should be withdrawn from the churches and given over to the civil authorities.

And with a threat he raised his fist over the woman's head. A laugh, the disdainful laugh of people who are not more to be frightened by any threats, passed through the crowd.

"You should have said so before. . . . You only know the fist. . . . We've always seen that from the policemen. That's an old dodge."

And again a sonorous woman's voice was heard:

"And still we shall never give up our Holy things."

This phrase, "Holy things," beat like a white bird over the tortuous confusion of ideas. Together with the pigeons it circled round the Kremlin square between the belfries and the cupolas, over the damaged red monastery wall, and rose towards the golden crosses of the ancient cathedrals, over which a short time ago the shells had whistled. And it descended again to the earth, flew over the crowd, was repeated from mouth to mouth, with a prayer, with derision, with fear, with anger, with faith, with pangs of expectation, with joy and hope. The utterances sounded broken and unconnected. They did not contain any of the ready harmony of a Cabinet or public-meeting eloquence. But one felt drawn to them by the force of reproach, sadness, and wrath in the people. Three surly-looking soldiers with rifles approached. They listened for a moment, and exchanged glances with each other.

"We'll have to fetch the sentry. It is time they were dispersed," said one of them aloud, and disappeared.

The other two remained. They listened silently and gloomily. May be they thought of their old church in their village, and the dark icons in the corner of their room in the cottage, and the whole habitual form of the Orthodox rite to which they were used from their childhood.

But, generally speaking, the soldiers, having

succumbed to Bolshevism, began openly to break with religion. Whether they were infected by the simplicity of Socialistic rationalism, or whether they felt themselves banished from sacraments, they are less frequently seen in a church. In the religious processions which rallied hundreds of thousands of devotees that winter least of all were soldiers seen.

And yet these religious processions have taken hold of a great number of people who formerly kept far from the church. So tormentingly heavy became Russian life, so difficult it came to be to find protection on earth, that involuntarily eyes were raised to heaven.

At the end of January I had occasion to take part in one of these great Church processions.

This was also in the Kremlin, in the so-called Red Square, near the renowned church of Vassili Blazhenny. From all parts of Moscow, from all its innumerable churches, separate processions of parishioners arrived. One after another these processions reached the square and a golden sea of icons and banners swayed over the crowd. They shone like lamps in the twilight of the day. New and old, simple and luxurious, they stood firmly, like an army called for review by some sovereign order. Around them pressed scores and thousands of people, expectant, and shedding forth their emotion, griefs, and hopes in prayers and chants. And although snow lay on the ground—it was deep winter—and a long way off till the spring feast of Easter, they continuously repeated the Easter prayer: "Christ is risen from the dead. . . ."

From above, the images of the saints we all know from our childhood looked at the praying people. The Mother of God, with white hands raised, beseeched the Lord. Saint Nicholas, with the sign of a cross, was blessing the people below. Our Saviour, the Apostles,

and the Saints—all from the height of the banners were gazing on the troubled, tortured, wounded, suffering, human herd.

The Kremlin bells rang, announcing to the people that the Patriarch was coming to pray together with the people. In front of him were carried slowly, one after another, the Kremlin Holy things, ornamentally wrought, magnificent, ancient, through the narrow fortress arches. As if in honour of their elder brothers the flickering rows of the church banners already crowding the square gave way to them. Excitedly and nervously, rarely exchanging a word here and there, the crowd awaited the Patriarch, the only man entitled to consider himself the representative of all Russia. And not only the faces, but it seemed that hearts also turned to that spot where, below the golden mitre of Patriarch Tikhon, slowly floated the dark purple, gold-embroidered banners of the Uspensky Cathedral.

The images of the Saints waved over the crowd as though they blessed the people, disgraced, hungry, wearied in body and spirit, not expecting intercession from any one on earth.

In the middle of the square, on a platform, the Patriarch, surrounded by the senior clergy, officiated at a divine service. Their voices were not heard, the words of the prayers were not heard. But in the breathing of the crowd of many thousands, welded in one sorrow, one longing, was heard a single prayer rising to the grey low sky :

" Lord, save and protect the Russian land. . . ."

Who may not be found here ? . . . It is not one class, not one party. It is simply the Russian people in all their variety. And many, many women, young and old, girls humble and high. Many wept, not trying at all to hide their tears. And yet a kind of satisfaction,

some relief was felt by all from the joint prayer in the midst of a town filled with devout traditions of the past, full of reminiscences of the mighty and ancient Russian State.

Indeed, it was long ago, many centuries ago, that Moscow lived through foreign invasion and troubles and all kind of disturbances. She fought with her enemies, overcame them, again leading the Russian people out into the wide historic road. Then also, in front of these Moscow Holy things, the people's prayer sounded :

" Lord, save and protect the Russian land ! "

## CHAPTER XV

### EVERYDAY LIFE

Chaos—Legends—House-Committees—Intellectuals Begging—Soldiers from Rumania—Russians fighting Russians—Streets—Drunken Pogroms—Robbers and Hunger—Murder of the Brothers Guenglezi—Sadism.

I AM nearing the end of my book, and I would like to give an idea, on general lines at least, of the ways of everyday life during the first four and a half months of the Bolshevist reign. Towards the end of March I left Russia, but, according to the papers and to the descriptions of Russians who left after me, the chief features of everyday life remained the same, growing sharper only, harder to bear, as a deeper stream of blood flowed over my country.

In revolution, as in war, an enormous part has to be allotted to the incredible and fantastical—a part surpassing anything that our imagination is accustomed to suggest. Events in prospect or in thrilling retrospect, people turning into heroes, leaders, or at least facile interpreters of popular will, the unexpected strength of some of them and the weakness of others, success and ruin, heroism and crime—everybody and everything moves along unexpected lines, adopts unaccustomed shapes which our reason is too slow to comprehend.

Thinking people become depressed and overburdened

on realising the fact that revolution does not develop logically, but appears to contemporaries as a series of nonsensical and meaningless accidents. From a distance only, when time has cooled and crystallised the revolutionary lava, it will be possible to evaluate and comprehend the dimensions of the eruption and the depth of the social fissures it has occasioned. Meanwhile, when action is still developing, when history with maddening quickness is writing under our eyes its mysterious records, even learned scribes and philosophers in most cases lose their heads and prove too slow in their comprehension of the proper meaning of events. Labouring under immense difficulties, thought is driving its way through a chaos resulting from the ruins of a shattered order of life, and faints for want of a guiding genius. To this accidental disorder intentional disorder of speech was added. The Socialists endeavoured to clothe the naked body of Russia in revolutionary phraseology. The air grew thick with meaningless, and therefore especially intoxicating, dogmatical speechifying. Reality quickly and mercilessly disclosed all the nonsense secreted in it, but a sort of mania of words went on developing, as if an invisible wizard had let loose amongst the people his magical formulae, bewitching the crowd by collective hypnosis, as those mediaeval legends relate which we were wont to read with sceptical smiles.

"Peace to cottages, War to palaces"; but is a democratic peace possible when Trotsky himself says that "an unfortunate peace" has to be accepted from the German Generals, which by order from Kaiser William they will enforce upon Russia?

"Self-determination of peoples"; but at the same time blood is flowing on the Don, in the Ukraine, in Esthonia, in every remote township, and Red troops

disperse by the force of arms not only the meeting of White Russians in Minsk, but also the meeting of Great Russians in Moscow.

All intellectuals are declared suspect, as "servants of the *bourgeoisie*." At the same time a Bolshevist Commissary, having conquered the rich city of Kharkoff (according to revolutionary terminology this was called "moving the front from abroad into the interior"), does not know how to proceed and sends to the official paper, *Izvestia*, the following nonsensical telegram: "Town all right. Armoured car patrolling streets introduces quiet. Capitalists will pay indemnity, otherwise we shall enforce payment. Meantime necessary to support workers in mines, factories. Employers fled, and we require technical specialists to take industry in our hands."

Later on, similar despairing telegrams are sent by leaders of food-commandeering expeditions from villages, where they search for bread: "No poor peasants found in village. All are rich exploiters. They refuse bread, but require convocation of Constituent Assembly." The reading of such news every day made it clear that common sense vanishes in revolutionary times and, like the *bourgeoisie*, is deprived of its rights. Logic had been dismissed along with the officials suspected of sabotage, and was declared "Kornilovist" and "counter-revolutionary." It appeared that revolution, especially social revolution, had no enemy more hated than Thought—sincere and sober. Truth became more and more suppressed, common sense experienced greater difficulties every day in clearing a way for itself through fogs and pits of revolutionary babble and reality. And legends were whirling along, bewildering everybody, overflowing the land and concealing the true sense of events.

It was so already in March, but after November the fog grew still thicker. Very few persons understood the strength and depth of the approaching Bolshevist danger. An enormous majority of intellectuals frankly and haughtily despised the Bolsheviks as adventurers with no interest in the Fatherland. Bolshevist theories were so evidently senseless, so impracticable and dogmatical. The reputation of their leaders was so darkly blemished by their indiscriminate choice of means. They falsified election results, quarrelled about expropriated money, made friends with the Tsarist secret police and with the German General-Staff. The Press proclaimed this aloud, the papers published lists of *provocateurs* and spies serving on Bolshevist Committees. Was it possible for such people to enjoy the confidence of the country? Of course not. But precisely the impossible thing happened. The masses believed, and helped the Bolsheviks to seize the power and overthrow the Provisional Government. When power was seized, the Press of different shades of opinion continued shouting that this would not last long; that to-day or to-morrow the Bolsheviks would be overthrown. And the Bolsheviks also considered themselves as caliphs for an hour, admitting this openly several times. Their opponents, in the meanwhile, lived on hopes that the desired liberation would come from somewhere, that Bolshevism would dispel itself like smoke, like a bad dream. In connection with these hopes all sorts of legends were circulating in the city. People were saying that "troops are marching from the front to reinstate the Provisional Government"; that "Kaledin was moving from the South, and the Cossacks were approaching Moscow." There was much talk about an armoured train that appeared not far from Petrograd. The train had passed Novgorod, running towards Moscow. Whom

will the train support? Kerensky? Lenin? But it may be Germans have broken through already? No one knew anything, but for some reason everybody believed that help was coming, and that the Allies would play a prominent part in it. The diplomatic representatives of the Entente were in Petrograd still. The Ambassadors see and know everything. Surely they will tell their Governments and their peoples; they will describe the burden under which Russia has fallen, the double burden of war and revolution. And in the far-away but friendly West, cut off from Russia by German trenches and bayonets, they will understand there the horror of the situation, and surely they will come to help the Russians, to save them from Germans, and from Bolsheviks bound to the enemy by treacherous bonds.

That was one of the soothing legends. Other legends, gloomy and fearful, were circulated about Germans, their influence, their presence in Petrograd, their power. The armistice was not yet signed, but eye-witnesses were describing already how they had seen German officers in uniform or mufti. Restaurants were named where Russian officers, indignant but impotent, had to meet with representatives of the enemy's army. The address was secretly passed round of the house where German officers had already been living for a long time. Their names even were known. The spikes of German helmets became conspicuous in the streets long before the arrival in Petrograd of the enemy's delegation headed by the important dignitaries, Count Mirbach and Count Kaiserling. The fact that their arrival was the result of an agreement with a band of adventurers, on whose invitation they came while all parties, all organised groups opposed peace and wanted to continue the war, gave a fantastical, stupefying

effect to the authentic, real advent of living Germans to the capital, turning it into a sort of nightmare. No one believed that the arrival of representatives of the Central Powers would bring grave obligations for the Russian people with it. And truly it was difficult to believe such a thing while the Allied missions, still remaining in Petrograd, were meeting at their club at one end of the Millionnaya and the Germans at the other, in Palace Square.

The decrees and orders of the Soviet authorities seemed just as incredible and unreal. They were published in the official papers. All the other papers were obliged to publish these decrees in most conspicuous places. Many of the decrees were placarded in the streets, nevertheless nobody considered them as having any significance ; they were looked upon as silly jokes of wicked boys, but not as acts of the Government. At first many people talked with the Bolsheviks as they would have spoken to riotous young hooligans. At the same time the intellectuals, separated from one another, divided into parties, hypnotised by their own belief in the immutability of revolutionary dogmas, were impotent to oppose them. It was like a nightmare in which robbers attack you and you find it impossible to move.

As to the masses, they were bewitched. A part of them believed in a Bolshevist miracle, that Lenin and Trotsky would make everybody rich, and turn them all into gentlefolk. Others did not believe it, but with a stupid, inert curiosity they looked on and waited to see what would be the end of it all.

Such inertia was especially astounding in cases of open attacks on the property of the people, as, for instance, the Bolshevist raids on the State Bank. The Red Guard was continually descending upon the State

Bank and recoiling from it again. The Bolshevist Commissary was persuading and arresting the clerks. The papers openly and harshly abused the Soviet of the People's Commissaries, accusing them of highway robbery, of the desire to appropriate the property of the people. Bank officials called on the citizens to defend themselves, while the citizens crowded the streets near the Bank and waited in perplexity to see what would be the end of the trouble. Soldiers passed along, armed cars were driving about, the Red Guard marched past clumsily, clad in mufti, carrying all sorts of unnecessary armament, frowning as they remarked the unfriendly looks of the crowd. Nevertheless, the Reds were conscious of belonging to a big organisation, coherent and decisive in action, and that gave them self-assurance, while their opponents were quite disorganised, and therefore inactive. For this reason the Reds proved always stronger in action, although they were always beaten in controversy. The defenders of Bolshevism, who instead of arguing went on repeating the same catchwords, "counter-revolution," "supporters of the *bourgeoisie*," "*saboteurs*," etc., were always left in the minority in debates. During more than four months, while I was living under the Bolshevist régime, and was present at numerous meetings in the streets or elsewhere, I never saw the Bolsheviks victorious. They organised their own meetings, attended by enormous, quite special crowds, and there they actually dominated. Sometimes they forced an entrance into buildings where meetings were held by other people, occupied the platform, drove out the organisers, refused their opponents the right of speech, and then also they proved victorious. But everywhere, when the crowd was not specially gathered by them beforehand, but congregated freely, when people could speak openly,

the Bolsheviks were beaten by logic. Their strength had nothing to do with logic, it consisted in the knowledge of how to capture by trickery the confidence of the masses, who do not live according to reason, but act upon the impulse of their senses. Profiting by a temporary blindness of the masses, the Bolsheviks succeeded in organising a compact minority of supporters, and when the masses began to awaken from the hypnosis they were already fettered in chains; they were surrounded by bristling bayonets.

The simple-mindedness of the Russian intelligentsia, especially of its Socialist wing, prevented an immediate conception of what had happened. With the same ingenuousness with which the Socialists, keeping in memory all the solemn resolutions of the Socialistic Congresses, awaited the support of the international proletariat, and hoped to obtain a democratic peace from Germany by the force not of arms, but of words, they supposed now that by Socialistic pressure it would be possible to bring to reason the dictators ambuscaded in the Smolny.

They were running about, creating committees, publishing declarations and proclamations, accusing, even threatening, without the slightest result. Their comrades of yesterday, Lenin and Trotsky, turned their backs on them, cynically and openly. And at the same time the average man, who with the pride of a new-born citizen had quite recently voted for a Cadet, a Social-Revolutionary, or a Social-Democrat, was passing through a really tragical experience. Instead of the long-awaited liberty, a new and more humiliating slavery had come. Public life was shattered to pieces. Private life was becoming unbearable. Nobody knew what to expect on the morrow. Nobody's life was safe, and no person could be sure of the safety of friends and

relations. Personal safety, the right to have a home, to work and to live, all the details of everyday life, presented a number of complex and tormenting problems.

After the *coup d'état* of November every house had to be organised as an independent military and civilian unity. In big Russian cities people live in flats, not in separate houses. In an average building not less than from 200–300 persons are housed. Already before the advent of the Bolsheviks, house-committees were elected in each building for the distribution of food, of ration-cards, of bread, etc. After the Bolshevist *coup d'état* the task of these committees became much more complex and wider. First of all they had to organise for self-defence. The militia, created after the destruction of the Tsarist police, was weak and imperfectly organised, and now the militiamen themselves had to hide from the Bolsheviks. No protection existed for anything or anybody. Any armed band could enter any house at any moment and rob it. The people themselves had to provide for their own safety.

In the house where we were living the men used to take turns in acting as guards. Returning in the evening from some meeting I always found two sentinels on the landing, near the lift. Their rifles were kept ready at hand. One of the tenants, an officer of the line, thrice wounded, who had been awarded the Cross of St. George several times, commanded the house-guard. He trained the others, teaching them the use of their rifles, and giving orders for duties. Besides him there were two more officers; the rest were civil service officials, merchants, an engineer from the electric station, a factory-engineer, etc. Mutual friendliness reigned throughout, and the general spirit was absolutely anti-Bolshevist.

In later days the house-committees got into great

difficulties, because the Soviets tried to use them as organisations for collecting money and commodities, or, to be more exact, for raising contributions in accordance with the decree enforcing on the *bourgeoisie* the obligation to work. Also, to deprive the committees of their middle-class character, representatives of the poorer classes were included, not by election, but by appointment of the Soviets, to realise even here the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. An ignorant soldier's wife from the suburbs, without any knowledge of reading or writing, would appear suddenly as member of the committee of a building inhabited by intellectuals, and start ordering them about.

However, in the winter of 1917–1918, at the time of which I am writing, the house-committees were still autonomous to a certain degree. Cases happened in large buildings, especially in co-operative houses, where tenants owned their flats, of committees engaging officers to guard the building and to act as house-porters. Then the local Soviet interfered. They could not allow "White Guards" to carry arms. It savoured of "counter-revolution." The officers had to be dismissed, and turned out to beg in the streets; the unguarded house was left an easy prey to robbers.

At the same time, in a neighbouring district the guard of officers was allowed to exist. Such are the peculiar features of a régime of Soviets. Each large or small Soviet applies its own rules of government. In Petrograd, where the number of quarter Soviets corresponded to the number of former police quarters, in some parts of the city life was easier than in others. The Sovdeps (Soviets of Deputies) of the quarter of Vyborg, Narva, Vasiliostrov, where Bolshevism was especially strong, acted ferociously, threatened, issued special regulations, ruined the intellectuals, together

with all the institutions created by them, all the schools, boards of guardians, dining-rooms for the poor, educational clubs, etc. And, on the opposite side of the street, within the borders of the territory of another Soviet, similar institutions succeeded somehow in protecting themselves and continued to exist.

On December the 27th all private banks and all their safes were seized. Next day their nationalisation was announced by a decree, which evoked the same sceptical smiles as all similar decrees had done before. As a matter of fact, this proved a death-blow not only to all the economical, but also to the political life of the country. The blow in this case was much harder than in cases of destructive raids by separate commissaries. All private persons and all enterprises as well were ruined. The activity of political organisations was stopped. Money proved to be indispensable to any organised activity; lack of money condemns most energetic persons to inaction. By closing the banks the Bolsheviks totally paralysed their political opponents. This is not properly understood by people who speak of the passiveness and inactivity of the Russians. The Russian intellectuals, *i.e.* the leading part of the Russian people, who alone, thanks to their education, were prepared for organised political work and statecraft, got into such straits after the Bolshevist *coup d'état*, as they had never experienced under the Tsarist régime. And, notwithstanding all this, they went on struggling obstinately, counteracting every move of the Bolsheviks. If, during the first period of the Russian Revolution, much absurdity was to be noted, much weakness, much inaction, and too much theoretical talk, the second period, which has not come to an end yet, and will continue until the inevitable downfall of the Bolsheviks, is remarkable for the undoubted heroism of the intel-

lectuals. I do not speak of the people at the top, of the aristocracy of brains, to which only a few comparatively belong, great writers, scientists, politicians, and statesmen. I speak of the scores, the hundreds of thousands of people of different classes, ranks, and professions, united by a common love of books, a common thoughtfulness, of endeavouring to get a proper conception of their own actions, and of the general ways of life as well. Those are the almost imperceptible workers, the small wheels that keep in motion the machinery of the State and of economic life. These people showed a truly heroical resistance to Bolshevist violence. Their patriotic feelings were offended by the ignominy of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. Arrests, murders, devastation, pogroms, the dispersal of municipal councils and of the Constituent Assembly, perpetual tampering with liberty and justice, created a general feeling of moral indignation. The Revolution of March had presented the Russian citizens with the boon of liberty, and therefore all the heavier it was to bear the chains of Bolshevist slavery, and the harder it was to awaken from revolutionary dreams and to get again into the clutches of a tyranny, a hundred times worse than any tyranny of the Tsar.

The average Russian intellectual did not bow to the new master, he did not show that passiveness at all, of which we are so often accused by foreigners. Risking his life and the safety of his family, he starved, but did not barter his conscience. The civil officials went on strike. The officers preferred to be voted out of the army, to remain in hiding, living under a false name, working with their hands to keep themselves alive, but they would not submit to the dissolute impudent authority of the 'soldiers'' committees. The officers organised associations of dockers, they worked on the railways,

unloading cars of wood or corn. Labourers looked suspiciously at these hard-working competitors. During the Revolution workmen were assured of their right to address unlimited demands to their employers, whether private persons or the State itself, but they refused to accept any obligations for themselves. Mostly because the Bolsheviks supported them, the workers obstinately refused to accept any system of piece-work, any minimum of output, anything, in general, that could act as a control over the productiveness of labour. The officers were paid by the piece, and therefore they were regarded with suspicion. Once they were found working too hard they were certainly counter-revolutionaries and White Guards.

The intellectuals went on, struggling, seeking to find an issue. Societies for mutual help and working associations were organised. Officers, barristers, schoolmasters, engineers got employment as house-porters, as messengers, opened repairing workshops for electric-lighting gear, carried on some petty trading on commission, trying in general to get hold of some sort of work. Thousands of people passed through the societies for mutual help, whose object was, in fact, to transform into common labourers the intellectual workers, most valuable to Russia because of the fact that they were so few in number. One had only to go out into one of the principal thoroughfares, the Nevsky in Petrograd, the Tverskaia in Moscow, to see that senseless waste of human energy. Officers were breaking the ice, selling newspapers, cigarettes, chocolate. A sailor or a soldier would approach them, negligently taking a handful of currency notes out of his pocket, and disdainfully smiling, would pay the officer-hawker.

It was vexing to look at them, one felt sad and

ashamed. And at the same time one pitied also the soldiers, very often one pitied them nearly as much as at the time when they were defenders, not destroyers.

While the freezing Christmas blizzards were whirling and howling in their mad career along the enormous Russian plain, covering roads, houses, villages, and railways with snow, troops of soldiers were tramping through Moscow, one after the other, like an endless greyish ribbon. I do not know why, but generally they were to be seen late in the evening. Carrying their heavy burdens of regulation sacks and bundles, wrapped in rags to save themselves somehow from the cruel gusts of wind that were driving in their faces big handfuls of prickly snow, their tired frozen feet tramping heavily in the snowdrifts, the soldiers passed from one railway terminus to another. Trams were passing them, sometimes a lonely motor-car would run past, shots were heard now and then, the inevitable accompaniment of outdoor life in Moscow at that time, but the soldiers went tramping on, paying no attention to anybody, tired and still untiring, disconcerted and unabashed at the same time. In the dim snowy mist, with a background of fantastical revolutionary life, these soldier figures seemed to be ghosts fleeting over from the far-away front, from the fields of death, to cast a look at the ancient Russian capital suddenly turned mad.

But at once when one approached and addressed one of them, the same well-known simple face of the real Russian peasant soldier showed from under the snow-covered tall fur hat. Despite their lassitude, they were quite ready to relate with their usual loquacity the story of their long weary journey. They were the remnants of the Russian Army, who had to hold on to the end in Rumania. They were living there far away, in a strange country, while confusing news and still more confusing

tales were reported about the great trouble that was shattering to pieces their own motherland. The soldiers listened to the news but kept on holding the front. Then somebody told them that they had fought quite enough, that peace was concluded, and that they could go home. The Rumanians did not want to let them go, and began disarming them.

"Disagreeable things happened," explained to me regretfully an elderly, bearded soldier, adding afterwards: "But, all the same, although they took away our arms, we were allowed to go. Thanks to them for that."

However they had to cut their way home to the native village through Russia, as if it were an enemy country. Nobody seemed to be interested in the human dust into which the once orderly, well-organised army had been transformed. Nobody cared for them. The old commanders were either killed or dismissed and the new commanders were fighting the White Guards and had no time to spare for soldiers silly enough to drag on to the end with their military service. No trains were prepared for them, no shelters, no meals. They had to get everything themselves, to get it by force really. Sometimes they stopped for several days at some railway station, already overcrowded with similar grey-coats awaiting an occasion to take a train by storm. Not only was there no food, but there was not even hot water to make tea, without which a Russian feels very miserable.

Luckily the majority had taken from Rumania some bread for the journey, otherwise they would have died of hunger, but even so most of them were starving. To get to Moscow they had to cover more than 2000 versts. And many of them were travelling farther, to the Volga, to the North, to Siberia; thousands and

thousands of versts had still to be covered. The winter was very severe. The frost was just as intense inside the unheated car as outside, as nearly all the windows were broken by soldiers also, who like impatient children were ready to break everything to get on board the train.

The trains, too, did not always take them to the places where they wanted to go. Very often did the driver stop his engine: it was impossible to go on, a battle was raging. And bitter words were heard:

"Russians are again fighting Russians. Our people are smashing one another."

They stopped there sometimes for a day or two listening to the shouting, not trying even to find out who was right and who was wrong. It was not their business any more. They had fought their own war to the finish. It was time now to get home and resume the accustomed peasant's life.

If the battle did not slow down the soldiers crowded around the driver and negotiated with him. Sometimes they threatened, ordering him to proceed, to take them to some other place, to take them anywhere, but not to stop at the same place any longer. The driver understood that there was no use arguing and discovered some detour, which would sometimes equal the whole length of England. They passed through towns, of which they never dreamt before, they heard shooting again, they got under fire themselves, they stormed market-places and small townships when they were hungry, and went on dragging along across bleeding, lacerated Russia, choked by the nightmare of civil war.

Russia, although it was their own motherland, looked strange. They themselves had suffered every possible suffering, on the front line they had gone through every danger of war. But they suffered honestly and man-

fully, as other millions of similar patient and steady peasants had suffered during three years of war. The enemy had destroyed and crippled them but he could not conquer them. If the future of these people had depended upon Germany alone they would have returned, of course, as conquerors to the motherland, and Moscow would have welcomed them with triumphal cheers, music, banquets, and flowers. But the organism of the State had broken down, the will to conquer had weakened, and here they came, therefore, these unfortunate soldiers, unwanted by anybody, forlorn and forgotten, freezing and starving, tramping along in the cold blizzard as if they were crossing a strange country.

It was hard and painful to look at these greyish, bent-down shadows, appearing, one after the other, out of the white curtain of snow, illuminated by the bluish light of the street lamps. They seemed to feel, somehow, that they were paying for the common sin of Russia, and they did not think even of blaming anybody. They simply told the short and broken tale of their trials. I cannot say whether it was their starving appearance that appealed to me so much, or the fact that during their three or four weeks' wanderings through the whole of Russia they had seen that happiness and quiet could not be found in any single corner of the land, that the martyred people were tossing about like madness, but I remember being especially impressed by the epic calm of these soldiers. They did not accuse anybody and they never complained. They went on saying only: "Bad things are happening. . . . Very bad things indeed. . . ."

The situation in Petrograd was worse than in Moscow, for the reason, perhaps, that there the enormous garrison, depraved by the Revolution, contaminated the arriving soldiers by its psychology, rightly qualified by

Roditcheff, the Constitutional-Democrat, as a psychology of revolted slaves, this qualification being repeated afterwards by Kerensky. Very rarely did the soldiers tramp through Petrograd in a continuous stream as I saw them tramping through Moscow in January, but at the same time the Petrograd streets were always full of soldiers. The city seemed to have been stormed by them.

In the dark winter months of 1917–1918 the streets in Petrograd especially presented a most untoward appearance. The snowfall that winter was unusually heavy, and as the snow was scarcely ever cleared away, nobody caring to keep the streets in order, enormous snowdrifts, in some places over a man's height, accumulated in heaps along the pavement. Paths were beaten through the snow by pedestrians, close to the houses, and along the road huge snow waves marked the route trodden by sledge-traffic; the half-starved horses climbed with difficulty over the snow-hills (hay was selling at about a rouble per pound), falling sometimes and dying from exhaustion. Dead horses were left lying for several days not only in the by-streets, but even in the Nevsky. And yet the streets were always crowded in daytime, and in the evenings as well.

Street lamps were few, and their light was dim. People hurried along, trying not to look at one another. The unrestrained, affable, effervescent sociability of the first days of the Revolution that transformed Petrograd into a continuous meeting was gone. Ever-watchful and irritable animosity had taken its place now, overhanging the dimly-lit corridors of streets, tearing the people asunder, rendering everybody's bereavements harder to bear. How could one know where was the friend and where the enemy?

Soldiers were moving about in crowds, with rifles

and without them. More soldiers came along, and still more again. There were always so many soldiers about in the streets of Petrograd that civilians were swallowed up by their greyish tidal-wave ; civilians hurried to hide themselves, to run away, to get into the shadow.

Petrograd was not only a centre for the numerous Petrograd garrison, not yet demobilised, which, together with the neighbouring detachments, consisted of two or three hundreds of thousands of soldiers, it was also a point of passage during the lengthy, arbitrary, and self-organised demobilisation of the enormous army occupying the north-western front. Before the Revolution that army defended from enemy attacks the beautiful capital of the powerful Russian Empire ; having been weakened now, demoralised, and having lost its senses, it rushed through Petrograd like an invading host, rolling farther and farther in its backwash, never taking heed of, or understanding anything, led by the one dominating tendency, to get home as quickly as possible.

The streets of Petrograd are crammed full of grey-coated soldiers. From time to time women are passing. If unaccompanied and lonely they pass as close as possible to the houses, or along the snowy roadway by the side of the pavement, trying to look smaller, not to be remarked. What business can a woman have in the half darkness of the evening in the unrecognisable streets of her native city, where the street lamps burn stingily and dimly, and shots are rattling merrily and loudly.

Tac—tac—tac. . . . Somewhere, very near, a rifle is talking. The passers-by do not even stop. It is not worth while. They are used to it. Some of them turn the head for a moment, while walking on, and listen, trying to ascertain whence comes the sound.

Soldiers pass in a group ; they are laughing.

" It must be near, in one of the by-streets. Comrades have got to a wine-cellar and are working there now."

They laugh quite in a friendly way, with a hint of envy perhaps. Drunken pogroms in the city happened every day. They started at the Winter Palace. Enormous stores of old and valuable wine were kept there. The wine was valued at the sum of 15 millions of roubles. Measures were to be taken to defend the stores, to wall up the cellars, to save the wine, but soldiers got to know whence came the attractive smell of spirits, found their way to the place, and the trouble began.

Legends circulated in the city about the happenings in the Palace cellars. Battles were raging, we were told, around the wine casks, drunken and sober soldiers alike were drowned in hogsheads, firemen pumping out a sea of wine overflowing the floors began drinking also, falling into the same pit when drunk. The battle raged for several days under the walls of the late residence of the Tsar, shots were rattling all the time. Sometimes the quick, business-like rattle of machine-guns was heard, as if somebody, trying to restore order, was leading a regular attack. Then separate shots started again, as if a guerilla warfare was going on for the right of entrance to the kingdom of Bacchus, or perhaps for the possession of brandy or champagne, in which soldiers were trading at the time all about the city. The prohibition of the sale of wine ordered by Nicholas II. remained still in force, and therefore the traffic in valuable wines was especially brisk.

The beginning of the drunken pogroms coincided precisely with the armistice. It seemed as though the dark business, transacted in a Russian fortress which was constructed for the defence of the country but had

been turned into a place of humiliation for Russia, had raised dismal, stormy waves in the soul of the people. Intoxicated by lying or mad speeches, it thirsted anxiously for another drink more customary and even more intoxicating. And day after day, week after week, the drunken savagery continued, overflowing the unhappy capital.

It started at the Tsar's Palace; later on Grand-ducal cellars were searched, then the turn came of private houses, commercial stores, and all other places smelling of spirits.

The Smolny tried in vain to persuade, even to threaten. There was nobody to execute the threats. Red Guards took part in the drunken riots side by side with the soldiers. Not all of them, of course; some of them disapproved, some even abused the rioters, but others sneered. And there were some who believed in a fantastical explanation coming from the Smolny.

There were stories of drunken pogroms organised by Cadets to strengthen the anti-revolutionary movement. At the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on the 19th of December, the general secretary of the People's Commissaries announced the discovery of a counter-revolutionary conspiracy for the robbing of wine-cellars in which the Constitutional Democratic party had taken part.

"Dark forces are watching us," said the *Izvestia*, "they organised the revolt of Generals Kaledin, Korniloff, and others to drown the people's Revolution in blood. These dark forces are trying at the same time to create a state of anarchy and disorder in the country, in Krasnoe and Petrograd especially. They lead ignorant and weak people to drunkenness and pogroms."

In the Soviet of the People's Commissaries hardly

anybody believed that drunken pogroms were the result of the incitements of the Central Committee of the Cadet party, which consisted more of people suffering chiefly from an overdose of love of order than of people with an inclination for hooliganism. But the Bolsheviks invented this legend about Cadet drunken pogroms because, at the moment, they thought it would profit them. They had not the necessary force to stop the pogroms.

During the whole of December and a part of January strange figures appeared on one or the other street in Petrograd, congregating near some house; they appeared and vanished, to reappear again. A crowd collected gradually on the spot, looking on and listening. Such things generally happened in the evenings when freezing, wintry darkness was settling down in the streets. People stood about as if they were waiting for something to happen, as if they were feeling that the struggle had begun there already. They were gazing into a by-road, a dark, narrow gorge, at the bottom of which they could see grey-coated soldiers moving slowly about. Perhaps the Soviet authorities had sent them? They were keeping order maybe, protecting ignorant and weak people from the temptation of wine? Then, in this case, why in the half darkness were shots heard from that place, and growls at times as if there in the snow, in the dim, greenish light of street lamps, a beast was prowling about?

We are not wandering about in a forest. A city raises its walls all around, a city that quite recently was gorgeously arrayed and proud of itself. The outward envelope of culture is still there, preserved somehow. There are the lofty buildings, the electric lights. The ominous face of Rasputin is still looking down from a cinematograph poster. Darkened trams are still crawling

along slowly like dreaming ghosts completing the ghostly appearance of the dismal street.

There are the shots again! A scream is heard; a groaning figure runs out of the by-road and vanishes quickly round the turning. A wounded man, perhaps. The crowd looks at the runaway with cold and hostile curiosity. Some time, long ago in the far-away spring days of March, when all Petrograd was living in the streets and the people were intoxicated by another wine, the wine of newborn liberty, they looked at one another with childish and happy trustfulness. It was a foolish mood to yield to, perhaps. The happiness may have been due to a blinding feeling of groundless optimism, but if life should be deprived of the moments of personal or collective pathos, what would be left of it?

The glowing sparks of great happiness, of a closeness of human beings to one another, such as was never experienced before, are extinguished. Animosity and distrust have again disrupted the compound, locking up the individual in his cell of personal emotions. Again man is a wolf to another man. Civil war has covered Russia with blood-stains, glowing red fumes of blood are rolling along, rising higher up, threatening to stifle, to kill, to blot out everything.

People are gloomily looking at one another. Each pair of eyes is suspiciously asking of others:

"Who are you? What evil are you going to inflict upon me? What evil deed are you hurrying to? How shall I protect myself from you?"

Having asked the questions, they turn away hurriedly. They hide themselves as if they were afraid of having said too much. Courage gets weaker every day, and gloomy, evil fear is getting hold of the people.

The most abject, the most humiliating of all fears, is

the fear of man by man, because there is no beast in existence more merciless, more insatiable in its rage than man.

One seeks to get away quickly from the distrustful, unkind crowd, to lock oneself up in one's own corner, between four walls, not to see, not to hear, not to know whither the sneering demons of anarchy are pushing Russia.

It was not the feeling of self-preservation alone that kept indoors the inhabitants of Petrograd, Moscow, and other cities. As the surrounding dangers increased in numbers the fear of danger grew blunter in many people. This sounds like bravado, but life was really getting so terrible that it was not worth while to be afraid, especially because there was no issue left; one could not go away. A cowardly soldier can run away even from the front line if he considers desertion less terrible than the enemy, but civil war, like a fire in the plains, covers the whole space at once and it is difficult to run away from it.

This is the reason of the growth of a special psychology, when people try to pretend that they are living as usual. They go to the theatres, they visit one another to take tea together, even in the evenings, despite robbery going on in the streets as it went on in the highways in olden times. In Moscow people were careful in the evenings to go about in crowds, armed, if possible, because malefactors, sometimes in civilian dress, sometimes in military uniform, stopped the passers-by and stripped them of their clothes. Sometimes they took off only fur coats or boots, sometimes also other clothing, and then they allowed the victims to go home in the frost nearly naked. My fur coat was never taken from me, although I walked about at any hour of day or night and often went

out alone; but several of my acquaintances were robbed in the streets.

Raids were also organised on clubs and theatres. Suddenly during a performance or a card party armed men would appear at all the exits ordering: "Hands up!" Robbery started at once. Money, rings, watches, jewels were taken away. Then the robbers commanded: "Nobody to move for ten minutes." And people did not move, waiting for the robbers to get into their motor-cars and drive away.

And on the morrow crowds collected again in the same theatre or the same club, as if nothing had happened there the night before.

Such carelessness is to be explained partly by a strong desire to forget, and partly by the fact that generally nothing more happened than robbery, pure and simple. Street murders were comparatively rare, although murders could be committed just as easily as robberies, without any risk of punishment. This does not mean that no murders were committed.

In January 1918, 135 murders were committed in Petrograd, but for the same month *15,600* house robberies were recorded, and such a disproportion between robberies and murders shows that some restraining principles were still alive in the human soul.

However, there existed a certain category of people to whom summary justice was meted out at once, and with beastly cruelty: the so-called profiteers and speculators. Every time when some one was suspected of hoarding food or speculating in food-stuffs, the crowd lost its equilibrium. It happened sometimes that a woman selling a few pounds of bread in the street would be thrown into the river and drowned. How dared she extort such a price! Bag-men, *i.e.* people smuggling provisions into the city, were thrown under

railway trains, although without these provisions hunger would have been felt more keenly. The same crowds robbed the provision trains afterwards, and even shooting did not disperse them at once. In the winter of 1917–18 famine had already shown its claws and had begun to strangle the population of big cities, Petrograd and Moscow especially. They had not then reached the degree of famished numbness which later crept over all the town dwellers in Northern Russia, but talk about food, and unexpressed longings for food, and dreams about it, especially, were already becoming a sort of obsession.

In February we held a small meeting at the editorial office of the *Rech*. We were talking, as usual, about the mysterious negotiations of Brest, about Germans, about the Allies, and what they were thinking, and whether we could succeed without their support. The same endless Russian argumentation was going on, when suddenly one of the editors said:

"I am hungry, you know."

Other people present looked at one another smiling sadly and shrugging their shoulders.

"Hungry? Well, I am always hungry myself."

"I also. . . ."

"I too. . . ."

And then we began talking at once about our editorial affairs, as if ashamed of this outburst. The man who started the hunger talk was a journalist with a well-known name, still earning plenty of money as the paper continued to appear, although at intervals.[1]

[1] The *Rech* was suppressed later, as were all the other papers. One of the people present at the meeting, Feigelson, an experienced and honest reporter, very well known to all intellectual Petrograd, did actually die from starvation. Most of his co-editors had left Petrograd, but he could not leave, having just enough money to send his family away. One had to pay big bribes for the right to get out of the city. He could have arranged matters in a simpler way by selling his journalistic experience to the Bolsheviks, who would have employed

Not only the middle class and the intellectuals were starving, the whole population of the city was undergoing the same ordeal, except the privileged Soviet officials. It was so difficult to get bread, the food control institutions organised by the Soviets were so helpless that the big works and factories tried themselves to organise the feeding of their people. In January 1918 the big engineering Kolomna works constructed an armoured train, hired a military escort, armed the escort with rifles and machine-guns, and having entrained this peculiar military expedition, sent it to the South, into the Ukraine, to get corn. The corn was duly found there and bought at a much higher price than the prices fixed by the Soviets. Twenty-five cars were loaded and started on their way back. Returning, the train had to break through the barriers of different governments and Soviets that had then already partitioned Russia. At some places they paid to pass, at others they had to shoot. Sometimes they had to negotiate and surrender a part of their spoils to the starving population, sometimes they made their way through by force. Several cars had to be abandoned on the way, but nevertheless plenty of corn was safely brought home.

With every consecutive month of the Bolshevist régime famine and anarchy are growing, and trade and manufacture are decaying steadily, and as a result mutual animosity and irritation are also growing. They are manifested most strongly in the action of the Bolsheviks themselves, who have made of violence and murder the mainstay of their power. Human life has lost all its value.

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him quite willingly, but the old journalist did not like to barter his conscience. He was found dead in an empty flat. The medical statement was: "Death from starvation."

It was so already from the first days of the installation of the so-called Soviet republic. The shooting of military cadets and officers had turned into wholesale massacres at such places for instance as Sebastopol, Simferopol, Kiev, Vyborg, Cronstadt, etc. This happened at the time when Trotsky and his comrades were openly talking of the guillotine, but terror was not proclaimed yet as a system of government. That did not prevent the Bolsheviks murdering anybody, anywhere, without trial, or any other vestige of justice.

The Red Army men murdered openly in the streets the people who did not happen to please them. Murders were committed in prisons, in private houses, in barracks —anywhere, and people could murder anybody they liked. There was no punishment for killing a human being, as there is no punishment for killing a mouse.

Once, in March 1918, about 11 o'clock in the night, I was returning home from one of these tedious, ineffective meetings held for no practical reason whatever by members of the dissolved municipal council, to indulge in quite futile argument on the best manner of fighting the Bolsheviks. One could not well refrain from attending these secret meetings because of the fact that, notwithstanding their absolute impotence, they provoked great alarm at the Bolshevist headquarters in Smolny. Each time the municipal councillors were expecting to be raided by the Red Guards, when everybody would be arrested and prosecuted. One felt it a duty to share with the rest the danger of being transferred to the cellars of Smolny, where all arrested persons were interned, but it was very hard to sit through the meetings. The disjunction of Democratic forces, primarily pushed to the fore by the Revolution, was too evident, and it was not clear who would come to take their place? We all knew for sure that the Bolsheviks would

vanish sooner or later. But who would take their place?

Two friends were seeing me home, who had also taken part in the meeting. We were finding our way with difficulty through snowdrifts, along gloomy streets, weird and deserted. We had just arrived at the entrance of my house when we heard the rattle of rifle fire. It was the sound of volleys quite near to us. The young porteress opened the door, put her head carefully out, and looked outside.

"It seems to come from beyond that house," she said, pointing with a scared look at a house separating us from the Neva.

"No, it must be nearer," remarked one of my friends calmly. "It seems to come from my street."

The shooting continued. I invited my friends to come in and wait till it stopped. They refused.

"It makes no difference. They will stop here and begin at another place. We are sleepy."

I did not insist. We had got accustomed to the constant firing. Who knew when any one of us would stop a stray bullet? Some days afterwards we got to know what was the matter in this particular case. One of the departments of the Union of Towns was working for the prisoners of war. The department used to send parcels to Germany for the Russian prisoners—tobacco, underwear, lard, bread, and tea. Some rogue suggested the idea to a band of soldiers of robbing the stores, of robbing in fact the starving Russian prisoners. For several days the premises of the Union of Towns were consecutively invaded by Red Guards, soldiers, and representatives of the local Soviet. They broke open the boxes, carried the things away, spoiling and destroying as much as they stole, like Germans in a stormed village. And this was done

in Petrograd, quite openly, under the eyes of those who called themselves the People's Government. The men at the head of the Union of Towns telephoned to the Smolny demanding that the interests of the prisoners of war should be protected, but nothing was done and the stores were totally devastated.

One of those robber-bands, consisting of soldiers, were storming Millionnaya Street, where the Stores had their premises, when a party of young people were sitting around the tea-table. It was a farewell party arranged in honour of the brothers Guenglezy, who were going to France with their parents. The father was a teacher at a secondary school in the neighbourhood of Petrograd. The young brothers had joined the French Army as officers and were in a hurry to get away from Petrograd as the Germans were already approaching the city.

The Red Guards arrested all of them, as indubitable members of the White Guard, and took them to the Smolny. Next morning the young girls were set free, but their companions, three Russians and three Frenchmen, were taken during the night to the icebound Neva and shot on the ice. As a matter of fact they were not only shot but slowly and cruelly murdered. Two of the bodies were found quite disfigured and with evident vestiges of tortures. The eldest of the murdered young men was aged twenty-four, the youngest eighteen.

Papers were still appearing at the time. They published all the details. Letters of the bereaved father were published, demanding why his sons had perished, suffering in such a terrible manner when they did not even take any part in politics? The People's Commissaries considered it worth while to declare publicly that they had nothing to do with the murder, but the murderers were never discovered, they were never named even. Neither were the murderers of Shingareff and Kokoshkin

punished, although they were known. Together with the six students a seventh person was shot, whose identity could not be established. Evidently he was included quite accidentally in the massacre.

The number of such accidental and non-accidental victims was practically limitless, both in the cities and in the provinces. The same paper that published the letter of M. Guenglezy, senior, published also the order instituting an inquiry into the execution by shooting of the "big speculator and counter-revolutionary" Apter, by the Soviet of the Petrograd quarter. The Soviet authorities explained simultaneously that those "criminals alone who are caught red-handed may be shot at sight, but not the persons kept under arrest by the Regional Soviet." Such legal subtleties were not easily learned by the Red gendarmes. Once a person is arrested, he or she is certainly a counter-revolutionary, and a counter-revolutionary can be killed, and there you are.

There was an official *communiqué*, published on the same page of the paper,[1] stating that at the other end of the city, in the Rozhdestvensky Soviet, in whose district the brothers Guenglezy and their friends were murdered, the following question was asked by the Social-Democrats of the Mensheviks section:

"In the night of the 2nd-3rd of March, in the courtyard of the house N. 11 Kirillovskaia Street, several volleys were fired. Some time after this, five dead bodies were carried out of the house. They were heaped on a sledge and taken away. In the house N. 11 a military unit is barracked. Has the Executive

[1] I quote from the Constitutional Democratic paper, *Nash Viek*, of the 9th of March 1918. I have tried to take all my data and quotations from the Socialist Press, not because it is more trustworthy, I would not say that, but as I had to speak mostly about Socialists, I preferred to rely upon their own sources. In March, however, in Petrograd, all the papers were suppressed except *Nash Viek* and *Nasha Zhizn*.

Committee any knowledge of this case? And if not, what measures are to be taken?"

A member of the Rozhdestvensky Soviet explained that five soldiers were arrested that night because they were preparing to commit a robbery in a shop. When caught, it was ascertained that all of them were drunk. They were shot in the street at sight.

The questioner was not content with the reply; he explained quite correctly that they were speaking about different bodies. The men mentioned by him were killed in the courtyard. Evidently five more men were shot the same night in the same Rozhdestvensky district.[1]

All this happened in the quarter where I was living. My friends and I heard the shooting in the night, but Heaven only knows with which of the murders the shooting was related. We did not know what was happening, but even if we knew, if the bloody deed were committed under our eyes, we should have been powerless to stop the criminals and prevent the crime.

Perhaps they did not consider themselves as criminals, but as avengers, justified in what they were doing. They were told, of course, that the bourgeois and their servants were enemies of the people.

Social discontent, existing in every country, was made more acute by the propaganda of class war which, relentless and unimpeded, went on from the first days of the Revolution. The Bolsheviks had set all passions astir, they started civil war, preaching the destruction of the *bourgeoisie* together with the intellectuals, as one of the best means of creating a paradise on earth. The impunity of murderers added a special perversity to

[1] This did not close the list of murders reported in that issue of the paper. Reports were also published of atrocities in Sebastopol and Kiev, neither was it some extraordinary special issue. Every day when we get the papers we read in them reports and descriptions of murders and other crimes.

the crime, which the Bolsheviks increased by glorifying as a most gallant deed the destruction of the bourgeois and any other enemies of Bolshevism. Animosity between human beings forms an inseparable part of Bolshevist ideology. And as the masses were already irritated, apart from that, by disorder and impoverishment, there was no difficulty in stirring up their evil instincts and inducing them to commit dark deeds.

The more so because the example was given from the top. The crowd considered the Soviets as chiefs who at any rate were now the masters. And most malicious, partly criminal elements congregated around the Soviets. They formed the new governing Class, unfettered by law, tradition, public opinion, or bonds of connection with the people to whom they were absolute strangers. They could arrest, rob, assault, murder as much as they liked, with perfect impunity. And their own crimes had gradually killed the soul of these people and their conscience. They suffer from moral insanity. One has only to read the descriptions of massacres of officers, of the wholesale murder of the Romanoff family, of the crushing of revolts in towns and villages, to see that human sufferings do not arouse any longer a feeling of pity in the souls of the Bolsheviks and their servants, and do not even raise in them any healthy aversion. Without fear or disgust they go on committing murders and atrocities.

The lust of sadism, with which the actions of the Bolshevist leaders are marked, is undoubtedly contaminating a part of the population.

However, despite all these acts of madness, despite the flood of blood covering the Russian land, it would be a very great injustice to accuse the Russian People as a whole of all these crimes. The guilty party are the leaders and instigators, the doctrine is guilty, which is

based upon the naked beastly fight for material welfare alone, upon the absolute negation of the value of human personality, which is deprived of the spark of God-like, Christian love of man for man that the best intellects during many centuries have tried to hand on from generation to generation. Trotsky, Lenin, Zinonieff, Radek, Parvus, Kolontay, all these people cannot give the crowd more than they have got themselves. And precisely the moral principle is lacking in them which is the cement binding together human society. Detestation of falsehood, love of truth, consideration for the human personality, pity and conscience, all qualities, in fact, that are the essentials of true humanity, are lacking in these people, and the teaching they are propounding does not bind them by any moral imperatives. Therefore do they carry with them death and decay.

If their immorality should penetrate to the core of the masses, Russia would be definitely turned into a desert, inhabited by savage beasts. But I am sure that the people have still preserved a sort of moral restraint. The conscience of the people is not dead yet. The desire to build up a human life, a life of justice, of order, is still conserved.

Notwithstanding the lack of any restraint, or any prohibitions by the police and the authorities, wholesale burglaries and wholesale destruction of the intellectuals began only after the Bolsheviks had systematically started the thing themselves. And even then they had to perpetrate these abominable deeds with the help of hired alien criminals and executioners, Hungarians, Chinese, and Letts.

Evidently Russians were unfit for such a sordid business.

# CHAPTER XVI

## WAR WITH THE RUSSIANS—PEACE WITH THE GERMANS

The Self-Determination of Nations—The Home Front—Stories of a World Revolution—Brest-Litovsk Diplomacy—The Break with the Germans—Lenin and Trotsky—Panic—The Socialistic Fatherland and the Red Army—The Approach of the Germans—Peace signed on March 3.

WHILE yet preparing to seize the supreme power, the Bolsheviks had drawn up their principal decrees. Among these was a solemn declaration of the rights of the peoples of Russia. The Bolsheviks attached great importance to it and published it almost simultaneously with the decrees concerning the land and peace (15th November).

This declaration established the following abstract principles: (1) the equality and the sovereign rights of the peoples of Russia; (2) the right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, extending to their separation and the formation by them of independent states; and (3) the free development of the national minority and of the racial groups peopling the territory of Russia.

As this territory is inhabited by no fewer than one hundred different races, any measure extending or altering their mutual relations is of course of great importance not only for each one of them individually, but also for Russia as a whole.

The proper solution of the national question has long

occupied the attention of public thought in Russia. The centralising rule of autocracy raised many obstacles to the free and reasonable development both of its non-Russian subject nationalities and of the Russian people itself, and this considerably weakened the coherence and unity of Russia. But in spite of this short-sightedness, notwithstanding all the blunders of the bureaucracy, Russian rule in the East, in Siberia, in Central Asia, in Trans-Caucasia, improved the economic and social conditions of life among the native population, laid down railways, introduced a postal and telegraph service, opened schools, instituted courts of justice, and guaranteed safety to all.

Russian literature, journalism, science, and art had an enormous influence on the more educated members of the various races, for whom the Russian intellectual class was rather a comrade in the development of one general Russian form of civilisation than the representative of a conquering, sovereign race. They were especially brought together by a common struggle with the old régime. Georgians, Jews, Armenians, Tartars, Esthonians, Russians—all struggled together for political freedom. It seemed as if amidst common privations and persecutions, in prison and in exile, they had formed a firm alliance, that they might afterwards, working all together and as one man, create more fitting conditions of life in Russia. Of course, there were differing currents of thought among them, but on the whole the leading intelligent classes not only of the Great Russian race, but of Russia in the broad sense of the word, were advancing toward that political order which gives each race, each territory, the possibility of free development.

Almost all were agreed as to the necessity for the broad autonomy of races. The autonomous point of view was developed in greatest detail by the Cadet party. The Socialists, and a section of the Radicals,

went further and insisted on federation. Under autocratic rule this dispute was of semi-conspirative nature, as even abstract ideas, when not in accord with the views of the Government, were then punished as a crime, while the pursuit of autonomy was regarded as an attempt on the unity of the Russian Empire. After the Revolution of March 1917 the various racial movements assumed an impassioned character. The Polish question was simplest of all to solve. The Provisional Government proclaimed Poland an independent state. Finland got back her constitutional rights, infringed by the Imperial Government during the last quarter of a century. But the claims of Finland to complete independence were not supported either by the Government of Prince Lvoff or by that of Kerensky. Other races which had never yet enjoyed national independence or had lost it long ago (*e.g.* the Georgians) made various demands, which frequently did not express the will of the people, but merely the ambitions of a small group. Attempts were made at the separation of whole territories which had never yet claimed independence (the Ukraine).

The Provisional Government did not attempt to meet these demands, considering that it had no right to settle such fundamental questions without the representatives of the people, and awaited the summoning of the Constituent Assembly for their solution.

But the Bolsheviks shattered all these national dreams. Their attitude towards the nationalities of Russia is full of their characteristic contradiction between solemn and pathetic promises on paper and shameless arbitrariness in practice. This characteristic runs right through all their actions, as the reflection of their disorderly anarchism. On the other hand, the predominant Marxist side of their teaching impels them

to an international imperialism distinctly opposed to the principle of racial self-determination.

Marx placed class distinctions above national ones (the proletariat has no fatherland). This idea, with certain variations, emerges at all the international Social-Democratic congresses. Lenin, in fact, makes it his direct aim to create, by means of a world-revolution, a class super-state, extending over the whole world. His speeches on the free self-determination of nations are inevitably filled with hypocrisy and falsehood. The very idea of freedom is a stranger to Lenin and his comrades, and is incompatible with their Moslem-like conviction that the Bolshevist Koran contains all those truths which must be instilled into mankind by sword and fire. But when, for the extension of the influence and authority of the Soviet of People's Commissaries, they stood in need of one or another nation, they always tried to bribe it by verbal promises.

Following the general declaration of the self-determination of nations, decrees were issued and appeals made to the individual peoples. Having begun separate peace negotiations with the Germans, the Bolsheviks started a zealous anti-British propaganda in the East, particularly emphasising the despotism of the British in India.

On 5th December Lenin issued an appeal to the "Mussulman workers of Russia and the East."

> Moslems of the East, Tartars of the Volga and the Crimea, Kirghizes and Sarts of Siberia and Turkestan, Turks and Tartars of the Trans-Caucasus, Chechentsi and mountaineers of the Caucasus, all ye whose mosques and houses of prayer have been destroyed, whose beliefs and customs have been trampled under foot by the Tsars and oppressors of Russia: Henceforth your beliefs and customs, the institutions of your national civilisation, are free and unassailable. Live your lives freely and without

hindrance. . . . Support the Revolution and its fully-empowered Government. . . .

Moslems of the East, Persians and Turks, Arabs and Hindoos, all ye whose lives and property, freedom and native land have for centuries been but objects of traffic for the greedy marauders of Europe, all ye whose lands the robbers who began the War (*i.e.* the Allies) desire to share!

Far-off India, that India which has been oppressed for centuries by the enlightened freebooters of Europe, has already raised the banner of revolt, organising its Soviet of Delegates, throwing off the hated yoke of slavery, and calling the peoples of the East to battle and to liberation.

In the declaration declining Constantinople for Russia it proceeds:

The treaty for the partition of Turkey and its surrender of Armenia is torn up and destroyed. As soon as military operations are over, the Armenians will be guaranteed the right of freely determining their political destiny.

This passage is clearly calculated to attract the sympathies of the Turks, not of the Armenians. After the terrible massacres of the Armenians by the Turks during the war (with the indubitable participation of the Germans) to speak of the free self-determination of an Armenia not separated from Turkey is simply mockery of the Armenian people. The declaration is signed by Lenin and by Dzhugashvili, the Commissary for National Affairs. The latter is a Georgian, and a section of the Georgians has always been hostile to the Armenians, and in Trans-Caucasia has fought against them in alliance with the Mohammedans. This also explains a great deal.

It must also be remarked that the declaration refers to Mussulman beliefs with a respect with which the Bolshevist Commissaries never speak of the Christian Orthodox Church dominant in Russia.

Later, during the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations, where Turkey kept increasing the demands she presented to the Bolshevist delegates, a special decree concerning Turkish Armenia was issued (14th of January). In it it was announced that the Soviet of People's Commissaries "supports the right of the Armenians to self-determination, extending to independence."

For this end the following guarantees were to be given: the Russian troops were to be withdrawn and replaced by a popular militia, and a Soviet of Delegates of the Armenian People was to be created.

This latter point expresses the real attitude of the Bolsheviks to different nationalities. Submit to us, introduce our system of government among yourselves, ruin your own people as we are ruining the Russians, and we will be your friends.

The celebrated formula of the self-determination of nations, which brought so much confusion into the Russian Revolution and about which the Bolsheviks raised the loudest clamour, was now interpreted by them exclusively as the self-determination of nations on a Bolshevist basis.

During his negotiations with Trotsky at Brest General Hoffman, in declining to accept this formula, was fully entitled to refer to the fact that the Bolsheviks themselves acknowledged the right of peoples to self-determination less than any one else.

The Bolsheviks broke up the Congress of White Russians at Minsk at the point of the bayonet (31st December). They not only sent an ultimatum to the Rada (Council) of the Ukraine in Kiev (19th December), but even began a regular war against it. In the Caucasus the Georgians saved themselves from the Bolsheviks by rushing into the arms of the Germans. In Moscow itself the Soviet forbade the Union of Great Russians

to hold meetings and to print papers. The Bolshevist troops obliged the Don Cossacks by force to acknowledge the authority of the People's Commissaries.

These were individual episodes in that ferocious and savage civil war to which the Bolsheviks devoted themselves, sometimes with the fury of fanatics, sometimes with the greed of banditti, while at times they managed to combine the psychology of both. The leaders of the Bolsheviks strove to concentrate the attention of the masses, of whom they were then masters, on the details of civil war, that their thoughts might be diverted from the peace with the Germans. The Soviet published news of what was doing at Brest-Litovsk, but sparingly and incompletely. On the other hand, it published joyful official telegrams about its victories on the Home Front, about the capture of Moscow and Orenburg, Vorenezh and Simferopol, Kiev, Taganrog, Rostoff, Irkutsk, and many other Russian cities. The Democratic peace, about which the Bolshevist Press continued to clamour, amounted to nothing more than a hasty and shameful capitulation to a powerful Germany and to new wars with less powerful opponents at home.

On 19th December an ultimatum was sent to the Rada. On 24th January a war broke out in Finland between the Reds and the Whites, in which the Bolshevist Guards took an active part. On 27th January war began with Roumania, against whom the Bolsheviks, for some reason or other, had long borne a grudge. (May not Rakovsky, Lenin's Roumanian associate, have had a finger in the pie ?) On 31st December the Bolsheviks imprisoned the Roumanian Ambassador in the Petropavlovsky fortress and released him only on the demand of the whole *corps diplomatique*, who visited the Smolny for the purpose. But when, after the declaration of war, the Soviet of People's Commissaries, in the rudest

manner possible, forced the Roumanian Legation to leave Russia at twenty-four hours' notice, the diplomatists of the Alliance were powerless to shield the dignity of their colleagues. This, however, is far from being the only instance of the helplessness exhibited by the diplomatists of the Alliance before the insolence of the Bolsheviks, with respect to whom the political leaders of the *Entente* failed to assume any definite attitude.

Roumania retaliated on the Bolsheviks by disarming the Russian troops on her territory, which may of course have been a matter of necessity. But she also occupied a portion of Russian territory, including Kishineff, the principal city of Bessarabia.

On all the other fronts the Bolsheviks fought with varying success, sometimes retreating, sometimes victorious.

The different stages of this bloody and insane civil war are so confused and form such a chaos that to describe them in brief is far from easy. The fact alone that at one and the same time, though in different places and in differing mutual relations, the Germans were now the allies, now the antagonists, of the Bolsheviks, complicates the story seriously. As a general rule it may be stated that the Germans supported the Bolshevist authority in such actions as tended to the ruin of Russia. They also supported in their struggle against Bolshevist authority those parts of Russia or those nationalities whose separatist tendencies were a danger to the future unification of Russia.

In Finland the Germans assisted the White Guard to defeat the Reds, and helped toward the separation of Finland from Russia. In the Ukraine the Germans supported the separatists, thus fulfilling the cherished idea of Bismarck, who had dreamt of weakening Russia by cutting off the wealthy South from the industrial

North. On the Don the German prisoners of war and officers helped the Bolsheviks to drive out of the Cossack territory the handful of officers who under General Alexeieff and General Korniloff had just begun the formation of the Volunteer Army. In Siberia the Germans, along with the Bolsheviks, established the destructive Soviet Authority by the most bloody of methods. Yet at the same time, after the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk peace, when a German Ambassador was already in Moscow, the Moscow papers printed official telegrams from the Vorenezh front reporting the capture by the Germans of one or another village from the Bolsheviks. The German forces did this in agreement with the Ukraine Government, which in January 1918 had sent a separate delegation to Brest and concluded a separate peace with the Germans. The Bolsheviks did not acknowledge either this peace or the right of the Ukraine to conclude a separate peace in general. On January 30th, aided by the local Bolsheviks, they brought about a revolution in Kiev. They deposed the Rada and instituted Soviets. The Ukraine Government tried conclusions with the latter. But the forces of the Soviet of People's Commissaries came up and occupied Kiev after a series of bloody battles and a destructive bombardment of the city. This Bolshevist victory was accompanied by a regular massacre. Not satisfied with the death or the shooting of those officers who had fought in the field, the Bolsheviks went from house to house with their lists and shot down the officers whom they found without mercy, in the presence of their wives, mothers, and children. According to an approximate estimate, about 2000 officers were killed. The story of the Kiev massacre is one of the most abominable blood-stained pages in the dark story of the Russian Civil War.

Ferocity is the distinguishing feature of all the feats of the Bolsheviks on the home front. They acknowledge this themselves, and even emphasise their ruthlessness in their conflict with the recusants.

At the third Congress of Soviets Lenin said: "Yes, we are men of violence. We stand for violence against those who exploit the poor, and we are not to be shaken by the cries of those who weep and lose their heads in the face of the great struggle." (January 22nd.)

They showed especial cruelty towards the so-called Kornilovists. The Bolsheviks hastened to crush the Russian Army in the process of regeneration, because they were afraid of this handful of brave men who had carried off the national flag of Russia to the Don, so that what was left of real Russia might rally round it.

Hastily echelon after echelon of the Soviet troops were despatched to the so-called Don front. That they might concentrate all their as yet insignificant forces against the Kornilovists, the Bolsheviks were ready to make any terms with the Germans.

This willingness to give way to the Germans was not a matter of chance, nor simple treachery, but part of a definite plan. By strengthening their position in Russia, even though it were with the help of German Generals, the Bolsheviks satisfied their vast ambitions and made for themselves a base for organising a universal revolutionary conflagration. As to their first personal aim, of course, they were silent; about the second they raised as great a clamour as they could.

Their leaders, especially those acquainted with the life of the West, such as Lenin and Trotsky, lied deliberately, affirming that the world-revolution had become a fact.[1] This lie was repeated without cessation,

[1] They affirmed this beginning with the autumn of 1917. Since that time many changes have taken place in the world. Thanks to the wonderful energy

in print and verbally, and in the reports brought from abroad by Bolshevist Commissaries.

A few days after the November Revolution the Moscow *Izvestia* (the official organ of the Bolsheviks) published the report of the foreign delegation of the Bolsheviks on the international situation.

"There is no European revolution," said the report, "but the period of ferment among the popular masses of the warring countries is already giving way to a new period of open mass struggle for peace. The existence of a Workmen's and Peasants' Government in Russia, the definite practical steps it has taken towards the conclusion of peace, and the demand for an armistice, will cause the proletariat of all the warring countries to rise, and the more powerful and determined the Workmen's Government will be, the sooner the popular movement in favour of peace will pass into an open revolutionary outbreak." (November 21, 1917.)

In another article the delegates wrote :

The creation of a united democratic front among us will give a powerful impetus to the cause of peace. The voice of the proletariat sounds in the West. Peace is coming.

This theme, with sundry variations, has been constantly repeated by the Bolshevist Press. The clearer became the severity of the German conditions of peace, the more shamelessly the Bolshevist orators and journalists clamoured about the general peace which the coming world-revolution would bring with it.

In Austria, indeed, in January 1918 a great ferment broke out among the workmen. The foreign correspondents of the Soviet exaggerated it and wired news of great disturbances in Germany. This coincided with the Third Congress of Soviets.

The uncultured, poorly educated majority in the

of the Bolsheviks and the no less wonderful short-sightedness of the statesmen of the West, the Revolution has actually become a universal fact, and who knows when and how it will end ?

Congress were unable to penetrate the depths of the deception in which they were entangled. It was in vain that the scanty opposition, the so-called Social Patriots, strove to explain to the peasants and workmen gathered at the Congress that the Bolsheviks were leading Russia to destruction. They were simply ignored. The vanity of the delegates was flattered by the mistaken conviction instilled into them that they were masters of the situation and that the Commissaries were mere executors of their will, though, as a matter of fact, the Soviet of People's Commissaries even then formed not the dictatorship of the proletariat, but a dictatorship over the proletariat.

Partly in order that with the help of the Congress the Russian proletariat might be prepared for the degradation of Brest-Litovsk, partly because, perhaps, they really still calculated on the support of their German comrades and wished to gain time, the People's Commissaries succeeded, about the end of January, in obtaining a ten days' suspension of the peace negotiations and carried on a double game at the Congress. In a series of clever speeches Trotsky withdrew the attention of its members from the external front to the home front. The international position of the Soviet Republic was represented as being not at all that of a country severed from its friends and given over into the hands of its enemies. On the contrary, certain little-known foreign orators, speaking for the Socialists of Switzerland, America, Sweden and Norway, assured the simple members of the Congress that the whole world was following the proceedings of the Workmen's and Peasants' Government with admiration. According to the words of these visitors, Parliamentarianism had outlived itself everywhere, and the power of the old capitalist system, which could not resist the pressure of the victorious proletariat,

was coming to an end everywhere. Their hearers gratefully applauded them, without asking either of what groups in particular they were delegates, or in what manner the success of the Social revolution had expressed itself in the countries in whose name they spoke.

Chicherin, the future Minister of Foreign Affairs, who at that time was quite unknown, except for the fact that he had just returned from England, where he had been imprisoned for pacifist agitation, represented the political condition of Great Britain in January 1918 in the following manner:

> The working masses of England are turning their eyes towards revolutionary Russia, and are beginning to exhibit great political activity in their own country. The revolutionary ferment in England is growing, in spite of all the efforts of the leaders of the English compromising Socialist parties, who strive to restrain the revolutionary current in the masses by means of watchwords stolen from the Russian revolutionaries. A shameless campaign of persecution and slander is carried on by the venal Press of the English *bourgeoisie* against the Russian revolutionary movement.

The People's Commissaries kept repeating in all possible forms that the proletariat of Russia had become the vanguard of the proletariat of the world, that Europe and America gazed with envy on the Soviet Republic which had created a new Socialistic paradise.

Chaos reigned all around. Fighting went on. Railway transport deteriorated more and more, and grew slower and slower. Difficulties in the supply of food were clearly leading to famine. Germany was treating Russia as a conquered country, yet at the same time the *Izvestia* wrote:

> Now, when the revolution has begun in Germany as well, our comrades at Brest are supported by the workmen not of Russia alone, but also of the Central Powers. And this support

gives them indomitable power, and they will know how to resist the demands of Austro-German Imperialism. (*Izvestia*, February 3, 1918.)

This was published in an official organ at a moment when both the Bolshevist civil employees and all who read the papers knew of the indemnities and annexations required of Russia by the Germans. The German Generals went their own way. If they had condescended to negotiate with the Bolsheviks, whom of course they despised, it was not that the Conference at Brest-Litovsk should be turned into a political meeting, whence the voices of the Bolshevist agitators might resound over the whole of Europe. The Germans needed, at any cost, a speedy cessation of military operations on their Eastern front and a treaty even if signed by the Soviet of People's Commissaries. They would have been very glad if the treaty could have been signed by some one of greater authority, but this was impossible. When Count Mirbach brought his delegation to Petrograd, there were men among his Staff who had formerly lived in Russia and had old acquaintances among the Russians. They tried to renew their intercourse with them, and both in Petrograd and in Moscow sought to enter into negotiations with more responsible Russian circles and men of mark. All this, of course, was carried on in great secrecy; but I have the right to affirm that such attempts were made, that the Germans made applications to commercial and industrial circles and to politicians, but met with an energetic repulse. The feeling of loyalty to the Allies was too strong among them, and did not admit of any compromises with the enemy. Perforce the Germans had to continue their negotiations with the Bolsheviks, though of course they could not but understand that a peace treaty signed by Trotsky, Radek, & Co. was neither more nor less than a forged bill of

exchange. Like usurers doing business with a slippery customer, the Germans accepted a document which went beyond the bounds of all prudence, so that when the day of reckoning came there might be something to discount.

The chronology of the peace negotiations between the Soviet of People's Commissaries and the Central Powers was as follows:

November 12—Peace decree.
,, 13—The parlementaires under Lieut. Schneur set forth.
,, 28—Meeting of the Plenipotentiaries at Brest-Litovsk.
December 18—Armistice.
,, 31—The Russo-German Conference in Petrograd began work.
February 10—The Russian delegation declined to sign the Peace Treaty.
,, 18—The Germans resumed military operations.
,, 19—The Soviet of People's Commissaries despatched a wireless accepting the German conditions.
,, 21—Parlementaires despatched.
March 3—Treaty signed, worse than the former one.
,, 17—The All-Russia Congress of Soviets ratified the treaty.

Altogether four months elapsed between the proposal of an armistice made by the Bolsheviks, who had declared themselves the Government of Russia, and the final ratification of the Peace Treaty. During this period the subsidence of the Russian Empire went on day by day, and the Germans found it increasingly possible to dictate any conditions they liked to their adversaries. The Bolsheviks cannot even be called a defeated side, as they had not fought the Germans, but after seizing the government of the country, had declared military

operations at an end. It would be more correct to say that both the Bolsheviks and the Germans had conquered Russia, each in their own way and each for their own ends—the Kaiser, in the name of German Imperialism ; Lenin, in the name of Socialistic world-Imperialism.

The details of the intercourse, negotiations, agreements, and mutual deception of these two singular allies, have not yet been revealed to the public. The Press has only been able to publish fragmentary information about the negotiations at Brest and also about the Russo-German Conference when it was opened in Petrograd on New Year's Eve, in the offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The principal representative of the Central Powers at this Conference was Count Mirbach. He arrived with his delegation while the diplomatic representatives of the Allied Powers and their military missions were still in the capital. The situation was very critical. An unpleasant collision might be expected any day, the more so that the first few days both Germans and Austrians sported their uniforms.

At last, in the beginning of February, the German conditions were published. Their chief sting lay in the ironically formulated second paragraph :

> Since the Russian Government, in agreement with its principles, has already proclaimed for all the peoples, without exception, belonging to the State of Russia, the right of self-determination, extending to complete separation, it therefore takes note of the decisions, expressing the will of the people concerning the desire of Poland, Lithuania, Courland, and portions of Esthonia and Livonia for complete national independence and separation from the State of Russia.

This fairly good parody of Bolshevist phraseology signified neither more nor less than the appropriation of

a considerable slice of Russian territory. That same annexation was threatened about which the Russian Socialists had raised such a clamour. But they had feared that Russia would annex, disbelieving those who said that if discipline were not retained in the army it would not be Russia who would annex, but Russia from whom portions would be cut away.

When the German conditions were laid before the Central Executive Committee, a lengthy resolution of protest was passed in reply to them. Arguing against the German decision upon the destiny of the races dwelling on the Western border of Russia, the Bolsheviks, *inter alia*, said:

> The statement of the German delegation that the will of the people in the territories mentioned has already been expressed, is not correct. In a state of siege, under the pressure of a military censorship, the people of the occupied territories could not express their will.[1]

The resolution wound up with the usual appeal to the workers of the whole world and with a proposal to transfer the peace negotiations to Stockholm. The Germans, of course, refused to do so. After some time, a delegation was again despatched to Brest-Litovsk. On this occasion one of the principal statesmen who entered into the so-called Russian delegation was an international adventurer, the Austrian Jew, Sobelson, better known by his *nom de plume* of Karl Radek. An educated man, far from stupid, but with a very discreditable past, his thoughts of course were least of all of Russia. The negotiations carried on by such men could not bear a serious character, and were more of the nature of a ribald *bouffonade*. Indeed, the Bolshevist

[1] These words might be used as a weapon against the later declarations of the Bolsheviks that they express the will of the people, if indeed words in general could serve as a weapon against them.

delegates themselves did not estimate the value of the Brest-Litovsk treaty from the point of view of the interests of the nation, the rule over whom they had seized, but exclusively as a means of propaganda.

The actual significance of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations lies in the fact that they tore off German imperialism the disguise which it had temporarily borrowed from the wardrobe of democracy, and exposed the cruel reality of landholding and capitalistic annexationism. The Brest-Litovsk negotiations have made everything clear; more than this cannot be required of them. (*Izvestia*, 22nd January.)

But the Germans persistently pursued their aim. They were weary of the peace farce. They had to put an end to it and at the same time show their own working classes the real importance of the Bolshevist babblers.

They laid down such conditions that even the Bolsheviks found it disadvantageous to submit to the will of the Germans immediately and without protest. Trotsky produced a stage-effect which cost the Smolny and its supporters no small amount of fear and agitation. On February 10, at a meeting of the Peace Conference at Brest-Litovsk, Trotsky read the following declaration:

In the name of the Soviet of People's Commissaries the Government of the Russian Federated Republic informs the governments and nations warring against us and of the Allied and neutral countries, that while declining to sign an annexationist treaty Russia on her part declares the state of War with Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria at an end. Simultaneously, the Russian forces on all the lines of the front are given the order for complete demobilisation.

At the same time, the Commander-in-Chief Krylenko issued an order for demobilisation, beginning thus:

The peace negotiations are finished. The German

capitalists, bankers and land-owners, supported by the silent co-operation of the English and French *bourgeoisie*, have required of our comrades, the members of the Peace Delegation at Brest, conditions which the Russian revolution cannot sign. But we cannot, will not, and shall not wage war against those Germans and Austrians who, like us, are workmen and peasants. (February 10.)

Therefore the war was declared at an end and the demobilisation of the whole front was announced.

This was called shortly—neither peace nor war. If the Bolsheviks had really been pacifists, such a declaration, and especially the simultaneous order for demobilisation, might be explained as the highest expression of peaceableness, as Tolstoy's non-resistance of evil carried to the extreme. But it was not a question of peaceableness. The People's Commissaries wanted to use their military power in another direction. They fanned the flames of civil war; they stormed Russian towns; sent artillery to shell Kiev, Voronezh, Rostov; they shot prisoners of war and the wounded. They had neither the power nor the wish to fight the Germans. Trotsky and Radek, those international adventurers who had built their career on Socialism, knew that they would have to submit to the Germans, but calculated that it would be more profitable not to do so at once.

On returning from Brest, Trotsky reported to the Central Executive Committee. He pointed out the inextricable position of the People's Commissaries:

Germany demands annexations and a war indemnity of ten milliards. Nevertheless, we must not carry on the War. The opinion that we ought to carry on the peace negotiations along with our Allies has no foundation. If we were to acknowledge it, we should also acknowledge that we must continue the War along with our Allies. But this would mean still further to weaken Russia which is already destitute. Even admitting

that the fortunes of War will be on the side of the Allies, *which is very unlikely*, this would be victory not for Russia, but for the Allies only, who would then present their bills.

Trotsky said that when he declared that the Soviet did not wish to continue this " unrevolutionary war," was demobilising the Russian Army and abrogating the state of war, German Secretary of State Kuehlmann exchanged sinister smiles with Hofmann and Count Czernin. One could read in their faces: " They will agree and sign everything."

But when Trotsky, in the name of the delegation, announced its refusal to sign an annexationist treaty, Kuehlmann, notwithstanding all his self-control, was bewildered. For the learned experts of the German delegation this was a surprise from the legal point of view as well. Their learned counsel made a long search in his books and discovered an analogical case only in the history of the wars of the Persians with the Greeks.

The report does not say whether this ancient analogy consoled the members of the Central Committee. Trotsky himself, seeking to justify the treachery of the Soviet, accused the Allies, as usual, of being the cause of the calamities and degradation which had overtaken Russia.

" The Germans are acting with the tacit consent of England, France and America at the expense of Russia, Lloyd George said—let Russia determine her own frontier. In these words, Lloyd George pointed out to the Germans that the more they took from Russia the easier would be their settlement with the Allies afterwards. . . .

" We stand within a ring of the Imperialists of the whole world, united against us. The whole question lies in how the nations will come out of the war: will France come out of the war under the leadership of

her Stock Exchange, or of her heroic proletariat? Will Lloyd George remain master of England, or will new masters appear—the workmen, who even now give enormous moral support to the Russian revolution?"

Trotsky finished his speech with an appeal to the proletariat of Germany and Austria, whom he held responsible for the fate of Russia.

As we know, the German proletariat then gave no answer to Trotsky and the Soviet, unless we take as an answer the eloquent silence of the German Social-Democrats. On the other hand, the Government of the Kaiser, speaking in the name of the German people, announced on February 18th that the armistice was at an end and that the war was resumed.

This created a regular panic in the ranks of the Bolsheviks. A conflict took place between Trotsky and Lenin, who demanded that a peace be signed at once, whatever its nature. That same night (February 18th-19th), in consequence of Lenin's insistence, the Soviet of People's Commissaries sent Berlin a radiogram, agreeing to sign a peace treaty on the conditions laid down by the Germans. In a series of articles, venomous and frank to the verge of cynicism, Lenin explained why the most miserable peace would be more profitable for the Soviet authority than war. The young Russian Revolution could not stand war on all fronts at once, and ought not to risk the lives of the Red Guards, "the cream of the leading proletariat." Lenin argued that "by stopping the war the Soviet authority frees itself from both the warring imperialist groups and can utilise their mutual enmity and the War, can utilise the period of free hands for continuing and fortifying the social revolution. The reorganisation of Russia on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the nationalisation of the banks and larger industrial undertakings,

accompanied by the barter of produce between town and country, is quite possible economically, given the guarantee of several months' peaceful labour. Such a reorganisation would make Socialism invincible both in Russia and in the world at large, creating at the same time a firm economic basis for a mighty Red Army of workmen and peasants." (*Pravda* for February 24th.)

Lenin considered that what they would sign would be not a peace treaty, but " a breathing space." This word, as well as Lenin's expression that they must sign a Tilsit peace, was repeated by some with bitter irony, by others with the full conviction that they were right. Lenin argued that to refuse to sign the German conditions would be " revolutionary bluster and bombast," that the Soviet was not bound to listen to the " Social Patriots " (this nickname had already been given to the Left wing of the Socialist Revolutionaries), who clamour about treachery and demand that the Soviet authorities should fight for the liberation of Poland, Lithuania, and Courland. " Without breaking away from the fundamental principles of Marxism and of Socialism in general, no follower of Marx can deny that the interests of Socialism are higher than the interests of the national right to self-determination."

But even in the Central Executive Committee men accustomed not only to revolutionary, but also to internationalistic bombast, did not accept these arguments at once. Actually, they had already agreed to capitulate, but the Germans were in no haste to reply, disbelieving the radiogram and demanding a document signed by the Soviet. While the courier despatched with this document was on his way to Brest, endless debates took place in the Soviet. Two currents of opinion appeared. Some supported Lenin. Others considered that the conclusion of a separate peace with Germany

on such conditions was a blow, not only to the Russian, but also to the German proletariat (this was the opinion of the Social-Revolutionaries). The internationalist Social-Democrats declared that " the conclusion of such a peace will undermine the authority of the revolution and allow the Russian counter-revolution to find support in German imperialism." Even when arguing against the Bolshevist peace which was to ruin Russia, the Socialists were thinking not of Russia, but of the Revolution. As before, they had the same aim with Lenin ; they both placed the interests of Socialism above the interests of the nation. But he was bolder than they were and went to his goal along a straighter path. His arguments convinced the Central Executive Committee. Lenin's proposal to agree to the German conditions was accepted by 116 votes against 85. That same night (February 24) the parlementaires set out for Brest.

In point of fact, the Soviet authorities had no choice before them. The answer of the Germans, signed by von Kuehlmann, to the Bolshevik proposal sent by courier was instinct with the authoritativeness of conquest, and concluded with the following order :

> The above conditions must be accepted within 48 hours. The Russian plenipotentiaries must at once proceed to Brest-Litovsk, so that within three days they may sign the treaty of peace, which is to be ratified in the course of two weeks.

This was a regular ultimatum. It was clear that the Germans would no longer allow the Bolshevist delegates to waste time in long, agitated conversations, but would make them conclude a peace without any evasions or declamation. Von Kuehlmann's conditions were more severe than the original ones. Not only Courland, but Esthonia as well, was to pass into the hands of the Germans. Armenia was to be restored to Turkey. The

Ukraine and Finland were to be cleared of Soviet troops and of the Red Guard. The Bolsheviks were bound to cease all propaganda against the Central Powers. The war indemnity was to be paid according to the German proposals, *i.e.* with a very large payment in gold. The *whole* of the Russian Army, including the newly formed units, was to be demobilised.

The units referred to in the last point could scarcely have been a serious danger to the Germans, and this demand was made rather for the greater humiliation of the Bolsheviks than for any practical end. The Central Executive Committee submitted to Lenin's magisterial demand for the signature of the peace with the Germans, but still a section of the Soviet raised a martial clamour.

Having announced the cessation of the armistice on February 18th, the Germans immediately renewed military operations and advanced along the whole front, taking one town after another. Dvinsk, Minsk, Reval, Pskov, all that previously had been but an unattainable military dream, now fell into their hands. With every day they kept drawing nearer to Petrograd. Their advance aroused panic and bewilderment in Bolshevist circles. With feverish haste the Smolny turned out declarations and orders whose solemnity was equalled by their absurdity.

After having already decided on surrender to the Germans, and having sent to von Kuehlmann a courier with a letter agreeing to any terms the Germans might see fit to offer, the Soviet overwhelmed the people with appeals calling on the brave to range themselves under the banners of the Soviet for the defence of their Socialistic fatherland. For the first time the word "fatherland" was used in an official document, but its meaning was lost owing to the adjective, as it was empha-

sised that for non-Socialists Russia should not be their fatherland.

Even under the pressure of the German advance the Bolsheviks continued to split the population of the Russian Empire into two warring camps, and to hound on the one against the other. " On the one hand, the bourgeois groups look forward to the coming of the German Generals for the crushing of the Revolution ; on the other, they make a furious onslaught on the authority of the Soviet. A similar spirit animates the Press of the compromising parties " (so they called the non-Bolshevist Socialists). " They depict the matter as if we had voluntarily lowered our banner before the Hohenzollerns." (Appeal to the working population.)

" The agents of the *bourgeoisie*, the scribblers of the Press, all those who have hitherto clamoured and accused, who had prided themselves on their patriotism, now await impatiently the coming of the Germans, which is to free them from the rule of the Soviets," wrote the Bolshevist papers.

Calling on the workmen and the peasants to devote all their powers to the cause of " revolutionary defence," the People's Commissaries announced that " every bourgeois resisting the arrangements for the work on National defence must be immediately put on his trial and forcibly made to work."

" All the members of the bourgeois class who are able to work must be enrolled in the labour battalions under the supervision of the Red Guards. Those who resist are to be shot." The words " to be shot " are to be found in every order, in every appeal, along with the call " to preserve order with a hand of iron."

To show what the Soviet authorities meant by this order I shall quote in full a document posted up in the streets of Petrograd :

The All-Russia Extraordinary Commission, attached to the Soviet of People's Commissaries to combat the counter-revolution *sabotage* and speculation, informs all citizens that hitherto the Commission has been generous in its conflict with the enemies of the people, but at the present moment, when the hydra of counter-revolution is growing more impudent with every day, inspired by the treacherous attack of the German counter-revolutionist, when the *bourgeoisie* of the world is attempting to strangle the vanguard of the revolutionary International—the Russian proletariat, the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission, acting on the resolution of the Soviet of People's Commissaries, sees no other means of suppressing counter-revolutionists, spies, speculators, burglars, hooligans, *saboteurs*, and other parasites than their merciless destruction red-handed, and therefore announces that all agents and spies of the enemy, counter-revolutionary agitators, speculators, organisers of rebellions, and participators in the preparation of rising for the overthrow of the Soviet authority, all fleeing to the Don to join the counter-revolutionary forces of the Kaledin and Korniloff gang and the Polish counter-revolutionary legions, sellers and purchasers of arms, to be sent to the Finnish White Guards, the Kaledin, Korniloff, and Dovbor-Musnitsky troops, or for the arming of the counter-revolutionary *bourgeoisie* of Petrograd, will be shot without mercy, red-handed, by the detachments of the Commission. (February 22nd.)

All is characteristic in this document, even its very style. It is written without a single full stop, as if to make it easier to lump up all together, both criminals and the enemies, external and internal, of the Soviet authority. This confusion corresponds to the judicial conceptions of the Soviet authority which permits its detachments "to kill on the spot all those whom the Reds may wish to kill." It reflects the malice, social immorality, mendacity and contempt for the human personality which pertain to the Soviet authority.

These moral qualities of Bolshevism will be reflected very clearly in all the long and complicated documents

published by the Soviet during the painful days of the German advance, when the Soviet authority assumed the position of an original form of passive resistance.

The working masses were called on to help the Soviets in their double conflict with the *bourgeoisie*, external and internal. And it was not of the Germans, but of the Russian *bourgeoisie*, that the Bolsheviks spoke with the most sincere exasperation. In a lengthy manifesto, announcing the formation of a Red Socialistic Army, it was explained that the army was needed for fighting the enemies of the workmen's and peasants' revolution.

> These foes are many. First of all, they are our own *bourgeoisie*, land-owners, capitalists, Kornilovists, and so forth. . . . It is not only the Russian *bourgeoisie* that directs its forces against our revolution, but all the Imperialists, who fear that the conflagration of the Socialist revolution which has broken out in Russia may pass over to their countries.

In this manifesto Austria and Germany are not even mentioned. There is only a hint, or rather an accusation more than once expressed by Trotsky and his comrades, that the Allies, having come to terms with the Germans, wanted to crush the Russian Revolution: "Facts at our disposal definitely show that the united bourgeois forces of the whole world are preparing an organised campaign against the Russian Revolution. . . ."

The call to defend the revolutionary and "Socialistic fatherland" was repeated by the Bolsheviks in a variety of forms. Words were sown broadcast by them with their usual impetuosity, but their organisation of the defence was very peculiar. In the life of the civilian population it expressed itself in a series of new acts of oppression and new restrictions which led to still greater disorganisation everywhere. Almost all the papers were

closed. "All publications opposing the cause of revolutionary defence and taking the part of the German *bourgeoisie*, and also those which aim at utilising the irruption of the Imperialist hordes for the overthrow of the power of the Soviet, are to be closed. The editors and contributors of these publications who are fit for work are to be mobilised for trench-digging." Though, as a matter of fact, *not a single paper* showed any signs of pro-Germanism, yet ALL the papers were closed, excepting the principal Cadet paper, *Nash Viek* (this was the title then given to the *Rech*), which somehow managed to escape, though it undoubtedly and openly aimed at the overthrow of the Soviet authority.

To ruin civil life was far easier than to organise the defence of the State. The military measures taken were so senseless that though we were not at all in the mood for laughter, yet we could not read the wonderful specimens of military creativeness produced by the defenders of the Socialist fatherland without a smile.

In expectation of an air-raid, orders were given that every aeroplane flying past was to be reported to the Staff by the House Committees of the city, though these domestic organisations were scarcely adapted for making such observations.

The Soviet of People's Commissaries announced:

> Let all our enemies at home and abroad know that we are ready to defend the acquisitions of the Revolution to the last drop of our blood.

A special committee for the revolutionary defence of Petrograd was appointed, on which were civilian Bolsheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The supreme Commander-in-Chief, Ensign Krylenko, who had just issued the order for the general demobilisation of the army, now issued an order for its revolutionary mobilisa-

tion. This warrior had curious ideas of war with the Germans.

We must meet the onslaught of the enemy with public revenge, with public terror. If we can succeed in throwing against him united masses of revolutionary citizens who will do battle, our desperate battle of civil war, not only according to the rules of military strategy, but by stealth also everywhere in small detachments and important engagements, for every town, every village, every street, every house in the cities, then there will be no forces which the Germans could set against us. Detachments of 1000–1500 men, sufficiently supplied with elementary weapons and light batteries, detachments capable of quickly entrenching themselves and attacking with the impetuosity of our revolutionary detachments of the civil war—such detachments will be sufficient for stopping the German advance.

Apparently they were not sufficient. The Germans occupied one town after another. It cannot even be said that they captured them, as no one fought with them, no one defended these towns.

The soldiers and sailors, completely demoralised, stupefied by a hail of contradictory orders and promises, threw down everything and ran away in all directions. As soldiers, they understood that men cannot fight without what is most important in war—without commanders—and they sought safety in flight.

Petrograd presented a most wonderful picture. No one knew where the enemy was, and indeed no one knew who the enemy was.

The three weeks which had passed between the proclamation of that singular formula—neither war nor peace—and the final signing of the Peace Treaty, only intensified the nightmare in which Petrograd had lived since the Bolshevist Revolution. The papers were suppressed, as "the Press is one of the principal weapons in the hands of the dark powers." But the official

periodicals too contained scarcely any information from the front, as people still continued to call the line of disposition of the German forces, though it did not possess the principal feature of a front—there was only the German Army on it, while the opposing Russian Army had long ceased to exist. It had ceased to exist not only because Krylenko had issued the order for demobilisation. Even before it, during several months, the soldiers had been demobilising without orders. The few units which still managed to hold out at the front, having lost their disciplinary cement, had ceased to be military units.

This was a period of general flight, or rather of a general desire to fly, anywhere from the unfortunate, ruined, starving city, which was struggling in the grip of a double war. But only the privileged were able to escape. The Germans were spread over the whole of the West, including Finland, where the Reds were retreating daily under the pressure of the Whites, who were supported by the Germans. It was possible to escape along two railway-lines only—along the Northern Railway, which leads to Vologda and beyond it to Siberia, and along the Nicolaievsky line to Moscow. The soldiers simply fought for places in the trains, while civilians could only obtain tickets through the Soviets. The Bolshevist officials and their families were the first to disappear, as news came from the West that in the districts occupied by the Germans the latter made short work of the Bolsheviks. Knowing people managed, for large sums of money, to buy tickets and permits, as departure from Petrograd was formally forbidden. A disorderly, extravagant evacuation of Government institutions and a part of the works was carried on. Some civilians managed to slip into railway-cars along with machinery, lathes, and bundles of Government papers ;

but these favourites of fortune were few and the trains were crammed principally with sailors and soldiers.

When the enemy army advanced, when the Germans took Dvinsk, Minsk, Lutsk, and finally Pskov, the soldiers fled to the East, like leaves driven by the wind. This coincided with the February snow-storms, when the already disorganised railway traffic was almost completely stopped by snow-drifts. Trains took forty-eight hours, instead of the usual twelve, to travel between Petrograd and Moscow. Locomotives and cars were covered with a coating of ice. Icicles hung from the roofs, the buffers, the platforms, decorating the whole train with a tracery of ice. The soldiers not only filled the cars, but clambering over the icy surface mounted on to their roofs, hung on the buffers between the cars, stood on the steps, or got into the tender. Sometimes a gust of wind would sweep them to the ground. Some fell because their strength gave way. Others were lifted off with frozen hands and feet, or sometimes dead.

Railway-stations became real fields of battle. Shots were heard from them night and day, especially from the terminus of the Nicolaievsky Railway which links Petrograd with Moscow and Central Russia. The soldiers took the terminus by storm, and the railwaymen were constantly in terror for their lives, as the crazed bands of soldiers threatened all and sundry with lynching.

The first to fly was the garrison of Petrograd, those same reserve units whom the Provisional Government had bound itself not to remove from the city, as they were needed for the protection of the acquisitions of the Revolution. From that time onwards, day by day, the garrison continued changing into an enormous mob of undisciplined parasites. The soldiers lived at Government expense, peddled all kinds of trash in the streets,

travelled gratis on trams and trains, misbehaved themselves in the streets, and sometimes marched about the town with placards bearing the most peremptory demands, such as: "Down with the capitalist Ministers! Death to Kerensky! Long live the Universal Revolution!" and so forth. But they took no very active part in the political conflict. They took care of themselves. The majority were soldiers from the rear who had never been in battle. To the sound of firing they were not accustomed, nor did they intend to accustom themselves to it. In their parlance, "We don't want to shed the blood of our brothers." Such was the answer they gave both when they were to be sent to the front and when they were to be used for suppressing internal disorder. The hasty flight of the garrison from Petrograd was only a fresh proof that they had no wish to shed their own blood in any cause whatever.

The next to go were the soldiers and sailors from Finland, from Cronstadt, from Dvinsk, from Reval, from all places where the Russian Army once formed a solid wall against the enemy. Now the former unselfish and courageous defenders of their country had become a herd of fleeing cowards. From the Warsaw, from the Baltic, from the Finland termini, they made their way across the city, on foot, on carts, on trams, directing their course to that same Moscow Railway. Along the Liteiny Prospect, from the Neva, day and night, sledges drove along, piled high with every manner of chattels, trunks, baskets, and bags. Many of them bore the names or the initials of their owners. Sometimes they bore a coronet. These were not sailors', but typical officers' bags. Beside the loads marched sullen sailors. The passers-by knew well enough that these were loads with plundered officers' property. And it was with contemptuous anger, with a painful realisation not only of

their own impotence, but also of the impotence of the whole nation, that the passers-by turned their backs on these men who had so bravely disposed of their defenceless officers and were running like dastards from the enemy.

The walls of the houses were plastered with posters bearing boldly printed appeals to defend the Socialist fatherland, appeals to the courage of the proletariat, and so forth. But the soldiers ran past in a business-like way, quickening their pace, faster and faster, as if the Germans were already there, so near that in another moment they would appear and take them prisoners all. The soldiers' feeling of community was already dead in these men. They were incapable of thinking either of the capital created by Peter the Great, or of Russia, or of anything abstract or ideal. Only the animal instinct of self-preservation now lived in these men, in whom nothing of the soldier remained but the uniform.

During these gloomy days, besides the fleeing soldiers there were other men in uniform on the streets of Petrograd—the former officers of the former Russian Army. They wore no arms, no shoulder-straps, no cockades, nor any other formal marks to distinguish them from the sea of soldiers flooding the streets of the capital. But we could distinguish the officers without any mistake by their military bearing, which had completely vanished in the soldiers. What especially betrayed the officers was the expression on their faces. There was a restraint in them, a deliberate, almost haughty restraint; there was none of that mazed consternation, that hurriedness which gave a bewildered expression to the soldiers, imbued with panic. Looking at the soldiers, especially when they crowded about the very doors of the railway-termini, ready to strangle one another if only they could

escape from the city, one might really believe that they were possessed by devils, paltry, dirty devils, who had for the time crushed out all human feelings in these unfortunate beings.

One day I was passing through the Znamensky Square. A newsvendor next me was sullenly shouting, "Germans in Gatchina! Germans in Gatchina!" Some absurd telegrams had been received to the effect that German scouts were within some thirty versts of Petrograd. A crowd of soldiers clamoured nervously and impatiently at the wide doors of the railway-station, waiting to be let in. Past them ran Soviet motor-cars in which workmen sat with thoughtful, anxious faces. From the Ligovka towards the Nevsky Prospect marched ranks of men in civilian attire. They marched awkwardly, not keeping step, evidently unaccustomed to the ranks. The weapons which hung on them, too, were not uniform nor worn in the same manner. Some had their rifles slung muzzle downwards, some muzzle upwards. One would be belted with two revolvers, right and left. Another, for some reason or other, had belted on a cavalry sword.

These men were but little like a trained unit fit for the fighting-line. But there was none of the defiant insolence of the Red Guards about them, rather a thoughtful seriousness and the consciousness of a great responsibility.

This was one of the few workmen units of the Red Army. It consisted of workmen from the Putiloff works, and was setting out in this state for the front.

Not far from me stood a short old man with a bundle of newspapers under his arm. His soldier's overcoat and cap could not conceal his officer's bearing. Judging by his grey hair and moustaches, he was an officer who had seen much service, most probably a General. With

quick, wise eyes he glanced at the semi-civilian warriors awkwardly marching past him, and quickly turned away. One could fancy that if they had fallen into his hands he would have turned them into real soldiers and led them properly against the Germans.

Meanwhile, on the other side, round the mounted statue of the obstinate and short-sighted autocrat, Alexander III., among lofty heaps of snow, several young men, also in soldiers' overcoats, swiftly and skilfully cleared away the snow, throwing it with their shovels into high sledges. They did not even glance at the Red Guards. War was no longer their business. They had been set aside from it.

They were young officers who had undertaken to clear away the snow from the streets of Petrograd. This means of earning money was yet within their reach, and enabled them not to die of hunger in Bolshevist Russia. While it was possible they had done their duty as soldiers honestly, believing that sooner or later, along with the Allies, they would crush the enemy and celebrate a victory.

But fate decided otherwise. Socialistic agitators saw in the army only a dangerous nest of counter-revolutionaries, and feared the officers more than anything else. From the very first day of the Revolution the Revolutionary-Democracy began sowing discord between the soldiers and their officers. The officers were insulted, humiliated, and deprived of power. The Bolsheviks finished the evil begun by Order No. 1. The officers were expelled from the army, or obliged to fly to save themselves from the savage excesses of the soldiers, by which so many of their comrades had perished. With the officers the Russian Army vanished too.

The Germans could not break it. It was killed,

poisoned by the strange spiritual gangrene of Socialism, poorly assimilated even by its leaders themselves, to say nothing of the masses.

When the Germans grasped the fact that Russia was paralysed, they simply advanced and began to occupy one territory after another. There was none to stop their advance or put any bound to it. The Germans stopped when and where they chose and found it convenient. The Russian officers could only look with impotent despair on the victorious march of the foe against whom for three years the Russian people had fought so heroically and at the cost of such terrible sacrifices.

While destroying the officers the Bolsheviks understood at the same time that without them there could be no army, and tried to draw them to themselves. An order was given for all officers to report at the General Staff Headquarters. The defence of Petrograd was entrusted to the well-known, experienced General of Engineers, Schwarz. Several Generals were kept on in the Staff itself. But all this was a mere caricature of defence, as at the head of it stood the Bolshevist leaders, who brought chaos and destruction into whatever they touched. The Commander-in-Chief, Ensign Krylenko, issued one senseless order after another. He once seriously asked a British officer whether it would not be better to blow up the Okhta Powder-Works that they should not fall into the hands of the enemy, and was much astonished when the Englishman remarked that, as the works were situated in a suburb, all the population of Petrograd should first be removed some twenty versts from the capital. It had never struck the Commander-in-Chief that the whole city would be blown up with the powder-works.

The Naval Commissary, a sailor named Dybenko,

celebrated for his ferocity, having gathered together a detachment of some 2000 sailors, led them himself to Narva, to defend the "Socialist fatherland" against "the White Guard bands of General Hoffmann and Wilhelm." Before departing he issued a magniloquent manifesto:

"Long live the Revolutionary War! Death to all cowards!" and so forth.

But as soon as the Bolshevist leader heard the crackle of the German machine-guns he bolted like a rabbit, creating a panic among the other units. Dybenko was so terrified that, making his way by a branch-line to the Nicolaievsky Railway, he demanded of the railwaymen, revolver in hand, that they should give him a special train, and calmed down only when he found himself in Moscow.[1]

Lenin was not far out when he considered that with such defenders it was more advantageous for the Soviet to agree to all the demands of Germany.

On March 3rd the Bolshevist delegation at Brest-Litovsk signed the Peace Treaty, but accompanied it by a declaration in which they complained with ingenuous cynicism that they had no army, though they themselves had dispersed that army.

"This is a peace dictated by armed force," said the declaration. "This is a peace which revolutionary Russia, with clenched teeth, is driven to accept perforce. In the existing situation Russia has no choice: having demobilised her troops, Russia has thereby placed her destiny in the hands of the German people."

And the German people took advantage of the non-existence of a Russian Army and laid down conditions

[1] For this exploit Dybenko was tried and sentenced to imprisonment, but escaped and did not serve out his sentence. Later he was again taken into favour.

more severe even than the original ones. They included an enormous indemnity and annexations both in the west and in the east of Russia. The Germans retained those territories which they had occupied during their fortnight's advance, including Reval and Pskov, and presented the Turks with a series of Trans-Caucasian towns—Batoum, Kars, and Ardagan. As the Germans demanded complete demobilisation, the Commander-in-Chief, Krylenko, consoled himself with the following declaration :

> One of the conditions of peace is the complete demobilisation of our Army. We shall replace it by the general training of every man to the use of arms. Every workman, every workwoman, every peasant, man or woman, must be able to use rifle, revolver, and machine-gun. In the ranks of the people who are building up a Socialist community, among the predatory capitalists there must not be a single man untrained in the use of arms. (March 4th.)

By order of the Germans the ratification of the Peace Treaty was to take place not later than March 17th. To escape some of the odium the Bolsheviks held an Extraordinary Congress of Soviets in Moscow. By this time all delegates inconvenient and undesirable for the Bolsheviks had been eliminated from the provincial Soviets, and in the Congress they had an overwhelming majority. Out of the 876 delegates gathered together there were 500 Bolsheviks and 198 of the Left-wing Social-Revolutionaries. The rest belonged to the more moderate Socialist parties.

The Allied Governments were so poorly informed as to the situation in Russia that the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, decided that the Congress was a sort of Parliament and considered it necessary to send it a greeting, expressing to it his sincere sympathy for the Russian people :

Though the Government of the United States is unfortunately unable at present to give Russia that direct and active support which it would wish to give her, I would wish to assure the Russian people through this Congress that the Government of the United States will take advantage of every opportunity to guarantee Russia anew her full sovereignty and complete independence in her internal affairs, and the restoration of her great part in the life of Europe and of contemporary mankind. With its whole heart, the people of the United States sympathises with the Russian people in its efforts to free itself for ever from autocracy and to become master of its own destiny.

This greeting, coming from the head of a democratic State, was sent after the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly, after the brutal murder of three of its members (Shingareff, Kokoshkin, and Loginoff), after a whole series of illegal acts, assaults, and murders, and, finally, after the separate peace negotiations at Brest, which were accompanied by a series of hostile demonstrations against the Allies. As a matter of course this telegram had a depressing effect on Russian public opinion. Not only did it not draw us nearer to the Allies, but it increased our painful feeling of being cut off from the rest of the world.

The vast majority of thinking Russians did not acknowledge the Brest-Litovsk peace. In Moscow the representatives of all the Socialist parties lodged a protest with the foreign consuls against the treaty. Similar protests were lodged by the Cadet party, the Commercial and Industrial group and other organisations.

And at this moment one of the most powerful among the Allies, the United States, greets the criminals who had made peace with the common foe as if they were the representatives of the Russian people.

This was not only insulting, it opened up the full depth of the misunderstanding of Russia, her calamities, desires, and needs. It is to be regretted that the further

history of the relations between the Soviets and the Allies is a protracted confirmation of this ignorance and misunderstanding which are ruinous not for Russia alone.

War with Germany, if not finished, was broken off, and no one knew for how long.

The Soviet of People's Commissaries, having fled on March 11 to Moscow (it was not so long since Trotsky had assailed Kerensky for intending to transfer the capital thither), took up its quarters in the Kremlin, which still bore traces of the Bolshevist bombardment, that it might thence, by blood and violence, establish Socialism not only in Russia, but in the whole world.

. . . . . .

The first year of the Russian Revolution ended with the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. Such a catastrophe Russia had not experienced for centuries. It appeared that the psychology of the Revolution had not strengthened but weakened, both in the army and in the people, the will to victory, without which no defence of one's native land is possible.

The Bolsheviks took advantage of the prevailing depression of the masses to subjugate the latter. For this purpose it was necessary to betray Russia to Germany. This they did without a moment's hesitation, as peace made them masters of the situation.

But the more responsible and clear-headed circles of the Russian people did not acknowledge either the peace of Brest or the authority of the Bolsheviks. The situation was paradoxical and apparently without any solution. A vast country, occupying one-sixth of the dry land of the globe, with a population of 175 millions, remained without any government, without any formal bonds between its constituent parts and in altogether undefined relations to its neighbours. It seemed as if

some giant hand had reversed the centripetal force which bound together millions of people into one whole, and, transforming it into a centrifugal force, had reduced the State to a heap of separate grains of dust.

But a people of many millions which under severe historical conditions had created a powerful State, a literature, an art, and a civilisation of its own cannot but fight against anarchy. It inevitably brings forward its boldest and most powerful members, who will begin building up the wrecked State anew. Again, with intensified will and enlightened thought, they will create for their people a fitting and vital form of common life.

The foundation of such a regeneration of Russia was laid in the south a few days after the November revolution. It was not without grounds that the Bolsheviks persecuted the Kornilovists with such fury. Those two Russias, the split between which was disclosed with such picturesque distinctness in Moscow at the State Conference in August, where the appearance of General Alexeieff and General Korniloff was greeted on the one hand with enthusiasm and on the other with mocking hostility, now found themselves literally in two hostile camps, the victory falling to the Left—the International camp.

In the first place, all the material advantages were on the side of the Bolsheviks. They held the munition works and stores, the factory for printing paper money, the railways, and the banks. All these external signs of power fell into their hands because the masses believed that the Bolsheviks held the secret of creating an earthly paradise. They were going to arrange matters so that there would no longer be the division of people into rich and poor, exploiters and exploited. The old dream of the destitute was to come true. All would be equal.

Abstractly speaking, the world was beautiful, man was free, what more then was to be desired ?

The masses, ignorant and unaccustomed to critical thought, could not grasp either the spiritual poverty of their leaders, nor the fallacy of their ideas. They trusted them, and with the childish greediness of men sufficiently exhausted by Social injustice, awaited the fulfilment of the promises which for months had issued from the lips of Socialist orators.

Strong in this trust and in their possession of the material means of warfare, the Socialist Marxists who, under the name of Bolsheviks, had seized the power in Russia, were in a condition to carry out any experiments they chose to the bitter end. All roads were open to them. If they have suffered shipwreck, if the vast Social laboratory called Sovdepia [1]—the very name is ridiculous—is not a glorious kingdom of happiness and freedom, but a dark chaos of crime and sorrow, it is only the Bolsheviks and their ideas that are to blame. It is no easy work to separate the blunders and crimes of individuals from the fundamental errors of the Socialist system, developed during dozens of years by the theorists of Socialism. The Bolsheviks are extremists. They occupy the extreme left flank of contemporary Socialism, and the methods to which they had recourse in Russia compose the maximum dose of Socialistic medicine for curing mankind of the diseased contradictions of capitalism.

But the Bolsheviks are undoubtedly Socialists, and their criminal example must sober many minds. Events have already shown the results of Bolshevist policy. Terror, famine, ruin, slavery, a terrible deterioration of morals—this is to what Lenin has brought Russia.

[1] A portmanteau nickname given to Bolshevist Russia, from *Soviet* of *Deputies*.

During the course of many months he has been dictating his will to the Russian people and though actually enjoying full power he has suffered shipwreck.

To expose the causes of the complete failure of the Bolsheviks in detail it would be necessary to write another book, more than one, indeed. Economists and politicians will seek the explanation of the Bolshevik failure in their contempt for right and for the law of economic necessity, of which the followers of Marx themselves have always spoken as of the principal law governing human society. Psychologists and mystics will seek it in their despotism, in their contempt for truth and good, as an absolute principle. Undoubtedly, the struggle of the Bolsheviks for power is one of the most soul-stirring pages and perhaps one of the most instructive for the last few centuries in the history of the eternal war between good and evil.

Within the boundaries of Russia, this struggle, at the beginning of Lenin's reign, was a very unequal one. Non-Bolshevist Russia had no means of resistance. After Kerensky had proclaimed General Korniloff a traitor, the patriotic wing of Russian society lost its principal support and hope—the Army Headquarters. While the General Staff was in existence there were hopes of saving from disruption at least part of the army, that principal sign and support of political life. After the arrest of General Korniloff all went wrong. There was no one on whom the Government could lean. There was nowhere for the healthy elements of society to group themselves. Bolshevism, and with it internationalism, was already victorious on September 12th, the day when General Korniloff was arrested. From this moment the Bolshevist advance on the home front

develops without hindrance. They capture one position after another without meeting with any organised resistance.

The arrest of the Provisional Government and the flight of Kerensky only confirmed the victory of the Bolsheviks.

But that very evening when Russian guns were firing on the capital of Russia, when civil war had unfurled its crimson banner over Russia, an old man of no great height, with grey moustaches and the calm and wrinkled face of the average Russian shopkeeper or clerk, left Petrograd by the Nicolaievsky railway.

This was General Alexeieff, the former Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army. A brilliant strategist, he had carried out most complicated operations on a vast front. During the summer of 1915, when under the pressure of the splendidly armed German forces, the Russian Army was obliged to retreat all but unarmed, yet not broken, it was saved by the military genius of General Alexeieff. Against the Germans he could defend himself. But to protect the Russian Army from the turbulent onslaught of the crazy pacifists, half-educated agitators, German traitors and dishonourable demagogues who flooded the front after the Revolution, was beyond his power. His foes gained the upper hand not on the field of battle, but by a deep flanking movement to the rear. With the intuition of a warrior patriot, he was one of the first to feel the coming danger, and as far back as May 1917, when pessimism was so freely identified with counter-revolutionism, he said at a congress of officers: "Russia is perishing, because unless we defeat the Germans Russia cannot be saved."[1]

The victory over the enemy was celebrated by the roar of cannon and the rattle of machine-guns in the

[1] This historical speech is quoted more fully in Chapter IV.

Palace Square. But General Alexeieff would not surrender, nor would he acknowledge himself defeated. Attired in worn civilian garb, with a few roubles in his pocket, lost in the crowd of passengers who were listening fearfully to the firing, he made his way to the South, there to regenerate the Russian Army, that necessary pledge for the regeneration of Russia.

General Alexeieff and the Russian patriots who gathered round him immediately were without men or means. And above all, it was impossible for them to attract the masses at once by word and manifesto. Honourable, thinking men could not promise the immediate realisation of all their hopes and aims when they knew that the War and the Revolution had left the people destitute, that before Russia lay difficulties, privations, and sacrifices, and not the sumptuous festival of immediate general prosperity.

Duped by a torrent of lies, blinded by the mirage of impossible promises, the people turned away from their faithful servants, believed them to be their enemies, and senselessly repeated every slander, every absurdity, launched against them by the Bolsheviks.

The news that General Alexeieff had made his way to the Don Territory and was recruiting a volunteer army at Novocherkassk spread rapidly throughout the North. Officers and military cadets streamed towards him. But to make their way to him was far from easy. The majority of them had no money. They had to obtain forged soldiers' documents, as the Red Guard and Bolshevist bands searched the trains and shot down all who aroused their suspicion. No small number of young men perished without reaching the Don.

Those who did reach the territory of the Cossacks found themselves in no easy position. General Alexeieff began his work with a capital of 400 roubles. To

organise relations with Northern Russia was difficult. The closing of the banks upset all calculations and made it impossible for sympathisers to support the volunteers. All around them in the territory of the Don the same revolutionary ferment and the same anarchical process was going on as in the north of Russia. The Cossack regiments returned from the front infected with Bolshevism. The situation was unstable. Their hetman, General Kaledin, sympathised from the bottom of his heart with the formation of a volunteer army which would undertake the task of continuing the war with Germany along with the Allies, and the restoration of a united Russia. But General Kaledin saw the dangerous currents of feeling developing among the Cossacks and was powerless to resist them.

The arrival in Novocherkassk of Korniloff, Denikin, Markoff, and other Generals made the situation still more difficult. Their escape from the prison of Bykoff, full of danger and adventure, surrounded them with a halo of legendary heroism. But if in this brilliant group of military leaders some saw the incarnate hope of Russia's resurrection, in others their name aroused the old fear of counter-revolution, though during the whole of the first period of the Russian Revolution the military had honourably supported the democratic Provisional Government and had not made a single attempt at the restoration of the Imperial dynasty.

The fame of Alexeieff's army went far beyond its actual numbers. The Bolsheviks decided that it would be more advantageous for them to crush the volunteers before they gained strength, and, even before concluding peace with the Germans, began to concentrate around Rostov and Novocherkassk an army of several tens of thousands of bayonets, which included a well-organised Hungarian unit. General Alexeieff was unable to accept

battle. He had not even 4000 men at his back. Again he had to save by retreat not the Russian Army, but the small though precious germ of a future Russian Army.

On February 9th the Volunteer Army, consisting almost exclusively of officers and under the immediate leadership of General Korniloff, marched out of Rostov, crossed the frozen Don, and departed into the depths of the Kuban steppes.

From that moment onwards the history of this army has been a long series of difficulties and great exploits. It had no money, no clothing, no munitions, no base, no country, no allies. Ragged and beggared, driven to the very foot of the Caucasian mountains, these Russian patriots preserved the banner of the Russian Army and the Russian State. They experienced privations and failures which at times bordered on catastrophes. On April 13, near Ekaterinodar, General Korniloff, who had been their comrade in the field and their heroic leader, was killed by a shell. The following September witnessed the death of General Alexeieff, whose health had long been broken.

But the army stood it all, remained whole and developed into a real army. It is now led by General Denikin, one of the best representatives of Russian military tradition. The whole Kuban territory is at his disposal. Already he has tens of thousands of men at his command. He is closely linked with the Don, the Crimea and Siberia, where Admiral Koltchak has succeeded in forming a strong and democratic government. All these spacious territories of Russia are now free from Bolshevism, whose yoke the North still suffers.

Slowly and in torment Russia is living through that last and most terrible paroxysm of the Revolution—Bolshevism. The process of healing comes from the borders towards the centre, gradually liberating territory

after territory. It is a painful process which for a weaker and less numerous people might be mortal. But there have already been great crises in the history of the Russian people, yet the national instinct has in the end led Russia into the right way. Russia will find it now also.

# APPENDIX

## 1917

*8th March.*—Food Riots begin in Petrograd.

*10th March.*—Nicholas II. signs the Ukase for the dissolution of the Duma.

*12th March.*—The soldiers revolt in Petrograd. Ministers arrested.

*13th March.*—Committee of the Duma formed. By evening the Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates formed. Admiral Nepenin, commanding Baltic Fleet, murdered by sailors. Massacre of officers at Cronstadt and Helsingfors.

*15th March.*—Nicholas II. abdicates the throne, in his own name and that of his heir Alexis, in favour of his brother Michael Alexandrovich. A Provisional Government is formed, with Prince G. Lvoff at the head. The Petrograd Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates issues Order No. 1 to the troops.

*16th March.*—The Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich hands over full authority to the Provisional Government until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. General Korniloff appointed Commander-in-Chief of the troops of the Petrograd region.

*19th March.*—The Provisional Government proclaims a political amnesty. Manifesto of Home Rule for the Grand Duchy of Finland issued.

*27th March.*—Proclamation of the Petrograd Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates to the workers of the whole world about peace.

*30th March.*—The Provisional Government grants independence for Poland.

*31st March.*—Abolition of capital punishment in the Civil and Military Law Codes.

*12th April.*—Promulgation of the Law on the Corn Monopoly. Opening of the first Congress of the All-Russian Soviet of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates.

*15th April.*—General Alexeieff appointed Supreme Commander-in-

Chief. Arrival of Lenin from abroad. Lenin's first visit to the Soviet.

1*st May.*—Declaration made by P. Milyukoff, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the aims of the war which must be brought to a victorious end.

4*th May.*—Armed demonstration of soldiers in Petrograd against the Provisional Government, and a counter demonstration of confidence in the Provisional Government.

6*th May.*—Resolution passed by the Provisional Government concerning land committees.

9*th May.*—Resolution passed by the Soviet to the effect that only its Executive Committee may call out troops. Prince Lvoff applies to Rodzianko, and to the President of the Soviet, Chheidze, proposing the introduction of new Ministers to the Government.

10*th May.*—Solemn meeting of the members of all the four Dumas.

13*th May.*—The Congress of Don Cossacks considers it necessary that all orders should be given exclusively by the Provisional Government. After hesitating three weeks the Soviet passes a resolution in favour of supporting the "Loan of Liberty."

14*th May.*—Resignation of A. Guchkoff, the War Minister. The Executive Committee of the Soviet is in favour of participation in a Coalition Ministry. General Korniloff resigns the post of Commander-in-Chief of the troops of the Petrograd region.

16*th May.*—Resignation of P. Milyukoff, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

18*th May.*—Opening of the first Congress of Peasants' Delegates.

19*th May.*—List of new Coalition Ministry published. Kerensky appointed Minister of War and of Marine.

20*th May.*—Congress of Officers at the Stavka. General Alexeieff makes his historical speech.

31*st May.*—The Cronstadt Soviet decides not to submit to the Provisional Government.

3*rd June.*—The Soviet announces that on 21st of June an international Socialistic Conference will be convened at Stockholm.

6*th June.*—General Alexeieff leaves the post of Supreme Commander-in-Chief. General Brussiloff appointed in his stead.

13*th June.*—Tereschenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs, hands a note to A. Thomas proposing to convene a conference of Allies for the purpose of revising agreements on the aims of the War.

17*th June.*—Opening of the Congress of Soviets of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates. Robert Grimm deported from Russia.

27*th June.*—The Ukrainian Central Rada (Parliament) passes an Act declaring the Ukraine autonomous.

1*st July.*—Kerensky issues an order for an advance on the South-Western front.

15*th July*.—Ministerial crisis. Ministers of the Cadet party leave the Ministry, in view of divergence of opinion on the Ukrainian question.

16*th July*.—Bolshevist insurrection in Petrograd. With the help of the Cronstadt sailors they try to seize power.

20*th July*.—Germans break through the South-Western front. Prince Lvoff resigns.

21*st July*.—The Provisional Government appoints Kerensky Prime Minister.

25*th July*.—Capital punishment restored for the troops.

31*st July*.—General Korniloff appointed Supreme Commander-in-Chief.

4*th August*.—The Public Prosecutor publishes results of inquiry as to the Bolsheviks receiving large sums of money from Germany.

6*th August*.—New Cabinet formed.

7*th August*.—Trotsky and Lunacharsky arrested.

25*th August*.—State Conference opened in Moscow.

3*rd September*.—Germans take Riga.

9*th September*.—Conflict between General Korniloff and Kerensky.

10*th September*.—Order issued to arrest Korniloff and other Generals. Cadet Ministers leave the Government.

10*th*–14*th September*.—Massacres of officers at Helsingfors, Viborg, Reval, Dvinsk. Conference of Provisional Government with representatives of various political organisations to deal with the ministerial crisis.

13*th September*.—Kerensky becomes Supreme Commander-in-Chief.

14*th September*.—Russia is declared a Republic.

15*th September*.—Establishment of the Council of Five.

18*th September*.—A General Meeting of the Soviet passes a resolution moved by the Bolsheviks.

20*th September*.—General Alexeieff resigns his post as Chief of the Staff, and is replaced by General Dukhonin.

22*nd September*.—In the Petrograd Soviet Trotsky mentions the guillotine for the first time.

27*th September*.—Democratic Conference in Petrograd.

3*rd October*.—Germans occupy the islands of Oesel and Dago.

8*th October*.—Trotsky elected President of the Petrograd Soviet. The Soviet passes a resolution against the Provisional Government. The General Secretariat of the Ukraine announces that the administration of the Ukraine has passed into its hands.

20*th October*.—Opening of the Council of the Republic.

4*th November*.—Bolsheviks form a Military Revolutionary Committee.

5*th November*.—Bolsheviks begin to shoot. No action taken by Kerensky's Government.

*7th November.*—The Military Revolutionary Committee declares the Provisional Government to be deposed. In the day soldiers disperse the Council of the Republic. Kerensky leaves Petrograd. Winter Palace taken in the night. Ministers arrested and placed in St. Peter and Paul Fortress. Russia declared a Soviet Republic.

*10th November.*—Beginning of civil war in Moscow.

*12th November.*—Bolsheviks' decree on the peace published.

*13th November.*—Bearers of the flag of truce sent out.

*15th November.*—General Alexeieff begins to form a volunteer army at Novocherkassk.

*25th November.*—Elections to Constituent Assembly.

*28th November.*—Meeting of plenipotentiaries at Brest-Litovsk.

*5th–11th December.*—The members of the Constituent Assembly attempt to open the Assembly. Members Kokoshkin and Shingareff arrested.

*15th December.*—Bolsheviks take the Stavka. Supreme Commander-in-Chief General Dukhonin is murdered by the mob.

*18th December.*—Armistice of twenty-eight days.

*19th December.*—Bolshevist Ultimatum to the Ukrainian Rada.

*27th December.*—All private banks seized.

*31st December.*—Bolshevist German Conference in Petrograd starts work.

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*13th January.*—Rumanian Ambassador arrested.

*18th January.*—Opening and closing of the Constituent Assembly. Murder of Kokoshkin and Shingareff.

*27th January.*—General Alexeieff's Volunteer Army transferred to Rostov.

*30th January.*—Rada repudiated by the Bolsheviks. Kiev taken by Soviet troops.

*10th February.*—Bolshevist delegation refuses to sign the peace treaty. Order issued for complete demobilisation.

*18th February.*—Germans resume hostilities.

*19th February.*—The Soviet of People's Commissaries sends wireless accepting German terms.

*22nd February.*—Under pressure of the numerous Red Army General Alexeieff retreats to the Kuban.

*3rd March.*—Peace treaty between Bolsheviks and Germans signed at Brest-Litovsk.

*17th March.*—The All-Russian Congress of Soviets ratifies the treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

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